

No evidence of Scuds in tankers

RIYADH (Agencies) — A U.S. military spokesman Tuesday denied that Jordanian oil tankers had been used to transport Iraqi missiles and that it helped the Iraqi military effort. The spokesman was asked: "Do you have any further evidence that Jordanian tankers have been used to transport Iraqi equipment in western Iraq?" He replied: "I do not agree with the term further. I do not have any evidence that Jordanian tankers have been used to support the Iraqi effort." Told that there was a statement in Washington saying that intelligence information indicated that Jordanian tankers have been used to transport Scuds, the spokesman said: "If there has been, I am not aware of it. I have to tell I have no knowledge about it."

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Arafat in Baghdad

AMMAN (J.T.) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat left for Baghdad early Tuesday after an overnight stay in Amman during which he was received by His Majesty King Hussein. Mr. Arafat, who also held a joint meeting with the King and former Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega, will meet with Iraqi leaders as well as Soviet envoy Yevgeny Primakov, before returning to Amman to attend a meeting of world statesmen and political and religious leaders in Amman this week, sources said.

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Iraq under fiercest aerial assault

Ministries bombed, casualties mount

Combined agency dispatches

ALLIED AIR strikes hit two government ministries Tuesday. A senior official said Iraq was being systematically destroyed.

Casualties are mounting, including six people reported killed in the latest raids. The city also is losing its sewer system due to bomb damage, raising fears of serious health hazards.

The National Assembly speaker, Saeed Mehdi Saleh, declared that Iraq's army had retained its "lethal developed weapons" despite the allied raids. He advised U.S. troops to avoid "certain death" by leaving the Gulf.

One of President Saddam Hussein's deputies called on Arab and Muslim sympathizers to go beyond protests and demonstrations and destroy the interests of nations in the anti-Iraq alliance.

"Demonstrations and rallies should not stop at extending a memorandum of protest or burning effigies, but to burn whatever is related to forces of aggression on the installations of the countries that are taking part in the aggression," Taha Yassin Ramadan, President Saddam's deputy as prime minister, was quoted by the government daily Al-Jomhuriya as saying.

"It is the duty of all Arabs and Muslims to destroy the material elements of evil and aggression all over the Arab and Muslim arena," he said.

Mr. Ramadan coupled his call with an Iraqi pledge of determination to fight to the finish.

"Either we die as martyrs or achieve victory. We will never choose surrender," he said.

Air and missile attacks on Iraq were "within our calculations... the aim of the aggression is to limit Iraq's fighting capability and its military industrialization," he added.

Mr. Ramadan bitterly attacked French President Francois Mitterrand for siding with the United States and described the position as painful.

"It is painful for us to see France's position. Mitterrand's administration has turned to be not only France's ally but also the ally of the United States."

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Israelis want to enter open war

Combined agency dispatches

PRIME MINISTER Yitzhak Shamir warned on Tuesday hours after Iraq's 13th missile attack on Israel that the government could not hold off indefinitely from retaliating to the attacks.

"If today we exercise restraint, it does not necessarily mean that we shall do so tomorrow," he told a group of visiting foreign Jews.

The Iraqi missile, which hit at about 1:30 a.m. (2330 GMT Monday) destroyed a house, and damaged about 190 other houses or apartments in a prosperous neighborhood in central Israel.

One person was buried in rubble but extricated with minor injuries, and five others also were slightly injured, the army said.

It was the second missile hit from Iraq in less than seven hours. It punched a deep crater in the earth, leaving only a chimney standing in an adjacent house.

The blast cut power and phone lines, punctured water pipes and sheared branches off trees. A car also flipped on its back, and windows and roof tiles were strewn for several hundred yards around.

"We shall always use the appropriate means to achieve our goal of security," Mr. Shamir added in his speech to foreign Jewish leaders.

He also noted the 1981 bombing of Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor, saying: "We have no intention of using nuclear capability."

Mr. Shamir's remarks underscored growing uneasiness in Israel at the deteriorating military situation. A symptom of the nervousness was unusual criticism Monday by Tel Aviv Mayor Menachem Begin, who said there was no national leadership in this war.

Defence Minister Moshe Arens told Israeli reporters in Washington that Israel's patience was "running out."

ugly colonialist face which slaughtered 1.5 million Algerians but it took France back to being a tail of the U.S. administration," he said.

Baghdad Radio reported early Tuesday that President Saddam had held a meeting with senior officials of the ruling Revolutionary Command Council.

The radio report did not say when the meeting was held, where or what was discussed.

Those attending included council chairman Izzat Ibrahim, Ramadan, Speaker Saleh, Culture and Information Minister Latif Jassem and Minister of Industry and Military Industrialization Hussein Kamel Hassan, the radio said.

It was the second time in three days that President Saddam convened a meeting of his inner circle. No details were provided of the Sunday meeting.

Military communiques said Tuesday that the U.S.-led allies had launched 96 more air raids on military and civilian targets, including a maternity hospital, but declared their bombs and missiles had not harmed its armed might.

The Iraqi army "has managed to maintain its lethal, developed weapons and the morale of its fighters and their high state of readiness to fight the enemies," Speaker Saleh was quoted as saying.

Baghdad Radio quoted a military spokesman as saying that nearly one-third of the allied sorties Monday night were directed at civilian targets.

"Enemy aircraft attacked a number of automobile and pedestrian bridges, a general hospital, a maternity hospital, a nursery, civilian cars, a wooden bridge, a water storage tank and tents occupied by nomads," it said.

Allied planes fired on "civilian houses and shops in a number of residential neighborhoods in some cities and villages," the radio said.

Also hit, the spokesman said, were "military targets in the southern operational sector" — a reference to southern Iraq and Kuwait.

Iraq has so far given few details on damage or casualties after almost four weeks of intensive bombing but the dead and wounded are believed to be in the thousands.

Mr. Saleh, quoted by Baghdad Radio said the armed forces "supported by the Iraqi people, are today

against Iraq at the "appropriate time."

Mr. Shamir noted this again, saying, "because we are not alone in the struggle against Iraq, we have to take account of the circumstances and the timing of anything we do and coordinate any plans we have with our friend and ally, the United States."

Opposition leader Shimon Peres also urged Mr. Shamir to continue withholding retaliation.

"We have no choice," Mr. Peres, head of the Labour Party said, on a visit to Tuesday's attack site. But he added "there is value in declaring that if for example the Iraqis use chemical weapons, Israel would change its response."

An Israeli official said Mr. Arens had sought U.S. approval for Israel to start entering Iraq's missile launchers.

Mr. Arens was in Washington for talks with President George Bush, Defence Secretary Dick Cheney and Secretary of State James Baker. He has due to return later Tuesday.

An aide to Mr. Shamir was requested anonymity told Reuters: "We are waiting for Arens to give a full report, we hope there is understanding for our need to end this threat."

"Israelis believe Washington had withheld permission for the Jewish state to enter the war, fearing an attack could disrupt the Western-Arab coalition against Iraq."

Mr. Arens said Israel could make a "significant contribution" to eliminating missile launchers in western Iraq, bombed repeatedly by U.S. and allied planes since war began on Jan. 17.

But Israeli officials say Israel cannot act without U.S. coordination. Washington is reported to have withheld "friend or foe" codes needed to prevent an accidental clash between Israeli and allied aircraft over Iraq.

Asked if he told U.S. officials that Israel could not refrain from retaliating for Iraqi missile attacks much longer, Mr. Arens told Israeli Television: "I do not think that I used precisely that expression, but it is important that they understand that it is not simple to restrain ourselves in these circumstances."



RALLY IN SOUTH: Residents of the southern town of Karak Tuesday stage a demonstration in support of Iraq and in protest against the allied war on Iraq (see page 3).

Bush says land war can wait, but army on combat position

Hammadi sees possible U.S. ruse

Combined agency dispatches

U.S. PRESIDENT Bush says a Gulf ground war can wait, but thousands of his marines are taking up combat positions against Iraq.

Military analysts weighed Mr. Bush's public declaration not to rush and keep the allied air assault going "for awhile" against a powerful combination of strategic and political factors they said might force his hand.

They also said his apparent shying away from a quick decision to throw more than half a million allied troops into battle could be a smokescreen to send the wrong signals to Iraq.

Mr. Bush, after consulting his top military advisers, said Monday the air war was going so well that a ground attack was not yet needed.

But while the talk in Washington was for possibly several more weeks of air bombardment to soften up Iraqi defences, reports on the front line said U.S. marines were moving into

attack positions ahead of an expected assault.

A pooled press report said thousands of men, carrying the minimum equipment needed for combat, were taking up forward positions in forklifts, a two-hour drive from Kuwait City.

A senior Iraqi envoy said Tuesday Mr. Bush's remarks indicating an allied land offensive was not imminent could be a ruse.

If it were such an attempt, Iraq was ready to handle it, Deputy Prime Minister Saddam Hammadi told a news conference in Algiers.

"If this battle happens today or tomorrow then welcome. We are ready to fight it," Dr. Hammadi said.

He called for Arab and Muslim states to form a front to help Iraq in the Gulf war, saying differences over Kuwait could be resolved later. Arabs and Muslims should also help Iraq by striking at the interests of countries allied against Baghdad.

Echoing comments in Baghdad Tuesday by First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yassin Ramadan, Dr. Hammadi said, "the field must be opened to the masses in the Arab and Islamic world to take a bigger role in

resisting aggression.

"The participation of the Arab and Muslim masses could take other forms, surpassing the stage of protests and condemnation of the war to attacks against the interests of the American coalition," Dr. Hammadi is on a North African tour and made his remarks after talks with President Chad Benjedid of Algeria, whose population overwhelmingly backs Iraq.

The Iraqi minister called on Arab and Muslim states to boycott economically, diplomatically "and in all fields" the 28 countries in the U.S.-led coalition fighting to drive Iraq from Kuwait.

"What we must work for is to unify a front. If there are differences on questions such as Kuwait we can resolve them among ourselves. We must avoid at any price any division of the Arab-Islamic front against the coalition."

Algeria and other North African countries have denounced the war against Iraq but also demanded it withdraw from Kuwait.

Dr. Hammadi said Iraq did not rule out a negotiated settlement.

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Primakov in Baghdad, Dumas in Moscow

Combined agency dispatches

SOVIET ENVOY Yevgeny Primakov waited in Baghdad Tuesday for a meeting with President Saddam Hussein, but there was no indication when the encounter would take place.

Mr. Primakov, who arrived late Monday, toured the Iraqi capital to assess the damage caused by 26 days of intense allied air raids, which are seen as the main reason behind Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's dispatch of his envoy to Baghdad.

Mr. Primakov left his hotel with the Soviet ambassador for three hours Tuesday but said on his return: "I have nothing to tell, I saw nobody."

Two hours after Mr. Primakov arrived in Baghdad, more than 25 explosions from allied strikes rocked the city centre.

Spokesman Vitaly Ignatenko told a new conference in Moscow that the main purpose of the trip by Mr. Primakov was "to convince Iraq to implement the U.N. resolutions."

"The Soviet Union still supports the United States but President Gorbachev is free to state his own convictions," he said.

In a weekend statement, Mr. Gorbachev expressed concern at the magnitude of civilian casualties and damage caused by allied attacks on Iraq.

Mr. Gorbachev said the U.S.-led allied forces could exceed the United Nations mandate to oust Iraq from Kuwait.

He called for a quick end to the war and sent Primakov to Baghdad on a mission to persuade President Saddam to withdraw from Kuwait and spare his country further "punishment."

French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas began talks on the Gulf war with the Soviet leadership on Tuesday.

Mr. Dumas, scheduled to meet President Gorbachev during his day in Moscow, was the first foreign minister from a member of the anti-Iraq coalition to visit the Soviet capital since war erupted in the Gulf Jan. 17.

"I hope to hold very interesting and useful talks with Mr. Gorbachev... on Gulf crisis and other important issues," Mr. Dumas told the official TASS news agency at the airport.

The reformist Izvestia evening newspaper said Monday Mr. Dumas would seek clarification of latest Soviet views on the Gulf crisis.

The Kremlin has told Mr. Primakov to ask Baghdad for any information about a U.S. television news crew missing since Jan. 21, the official spokesman said.

The spokesman told reporters that Mr. Primakov's instructions included an inquiry about the

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Crown Prince restates Jordan's commitment to peace, neutrality

Combined agency dispatches

LONDON (Agencies) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan has reaffirmed Jordan's firm commitment to peace and neutrality in the Gulf war.

In an article in the liberal Guardian newspaper, Crown Prince Hassan said Iraq's territorial claims to some Kuwaiti territory "are not without foundation."

A Feb. 6 speech by His Majesty King Hussein, in which he accused the U.S.-led allies of trying to destroy Iraq and impose Western control over the Middle East, was interpreted as a sharp tilt towards Iraq by Jordan, which has sought a mediating role in the conflict.

U.S. President George Bush said King Hussein had moved "way over into (Iraqi President) Saddam Hussein's camp."

But Crown Prince Hassan said Jordan remained firmly neutral. "Our allegiance to peace does not put us in any camp except that of peace."

Jordan "has repeatedly stressed the need to mobilise all efforts in the search for a diplomatic solution based on international law," he said.

Such a solution meant Iraq must withdraw from Kuwait as Kuwait's sovereignty was

"beyond dispute," Prince Hassan said.

But "it cannot be said that Iraqi territorial claims on some Kuwaiti territory are not without foundation. These claims predate President Saddam (Hussein), and it is a fact that he had taken more steps to finalise border delimitations than any of his predecessors."

The Prince added that evidence of Kuwait's overproduction of oil in violation of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries' (OPEC) oil-output quotas "is incontestable." Kuwait and Iraq are both members of OPEC.

"It is equally incontestable that the catastrophic effects of such over-production on Iraq's economy — and ultimately on the very integrity of the state — could not have escaped the notice of Kuwaiti authorities," he said.

He noted that "some evidence suggests" Kuwait's overproduction was part of "an international attempt to weaken Iraq" and that, if true, such an attempt could constitute "economic aggression" on Iraq.

The Prince also accused the allies of failing to explore all peaceful means to resolve the crisis.

Baker seeks to promote Syrian-Israeli talks

Combined agency dispatches

OFFICIALS of President George Bush, seizing on Syria's improved relations with the United States, are asking Israel to consider seeking an agreement with Damascus to demilitarise the Golan Heights, sources disclosed Monday.

The idea behind the proposal, which was advanced recently by Secretary of State James Baker to Zalman Shoval, the Israeli ambassador, is to engage Syria in Mideast negotiations.

The talks would be held at the conclusion of the Gulf war as a first step towards a wider settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Syria has joined the coalition fighting Iraq in the war.

The Israeli government has not rejected the initiative but its interest in it was said to be limited, according to the sources.

Some U.S. officials were du-

bious, meanwhile, that Syria would be willing to consider even a partial deal with Israel. President Hafez Al Assad has boycotted all U.S. diplomatic initiatives in the Middle East since 1974.

The U.S. proposal over Golan, which surfaced as Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Arens held a "busy round of talks, would not require Israel to relinquish more of the Golan Heights to Syria."

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy said Israel is anxious to move ahead with Middle East peace moves based on an assessment of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) pro-Iraq stand has ruled it out of the process.

"Israel is ready to negotiate without preconditions with all neighbouring Arab states," Mr. Levy told a news conference.

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Oil slick growing, threatens fishery

Combined agency dispatches

AN OIL SLICK, bay-hopping down the Saudi coast, is expected to extend its black swath over one of Saudi Arabia's main shrimp nurseries in the next day, officials said Tuesday.

The cost of fighting the effects of the oil slick is expected to be about \$1 billion over the next six months, government officials said.

And one Saudi source predicted Gulf Arab states might have to fork out up to \$5 billion to clean the semi-enclosed waterway, its shoreline and protect wildlife.

"To do something about the gulf as a whole over the next five to 10 years could be anything around \$5 billion," the source told Reuters.

After devastating Manifah Bay, home to cormorants, pristine beaches and rich sea beds, the slick rounded a peninsula and headed south into Dafi Bay, one of the most important ecological areas along the coast, environmental officials said.

"It's sneaking around the corner," one American specialist said. "We expect it to be on shore sometime within the next day."

The specialist, who like other sources spoke on condition of anonymity, said winds from the north would push the slick onto the beaches, sully rich tidal

pools where many of Saudi Arabia's shrimp are harvested. The crude could be bottled up within the confines of the large bay, he said.

"That will buy us more time to protect our desalination plants further south but it will ruin the bay," he said. "It's an important ecological space, way more important than Manifah Bay."

Dafi Bay is one bay north of Jubail, the site of the world's largest desalination plant and key petroleum industries.

Officials Tuesday said workers continued rush oil booms and skimmers to Jubail to further protect the plant.

The slick, one of three threatening the Gulf coast, has already forced the closure for at least three days of one desalination plant in Safaniyah, to the north. That plant has reopened.

An official from Saudi Arabia's Meteorological and Environmental Protection Agency said he was not sure the Jubail plant could be kept open.

"We're doing the best we can to protect it, but that might not be good enough," he said. He said officials were working round the clock, sleeping in their offices in an attempt to fight the slick.

Shutting Jubail could force the kingdom to ration water in the capital, Riyadh.

Athens mayor: Baghdad faces epidemics threat

By Alex Ely
The Associated Press

AMMAN — The mayor of Athens has called for urgent international action to save Baghdad from the threat of deadly epidemics caused by the Gulf war.

Antonis Tritis, who returned Monday from a two-day visit to Baghdad, said the threat stemmed from overflowing sewage and contaminated drinking water.

"You have four million people drinking contaminated water, the sewage coming up to the surface, something that can lead to an epidemic of an extraordinary scale," he said in an interview.

"I don't think these people deserve that, no matter what their government can be charged with, or whatever the cause of the war, or injustice on one side or another."

"These four million people should be protected. They need the help of the international community, of the United States ... to avert this great health hazard."

Mr. Tritis argued that electric power needed to be restored to the capital immediately so that the water and sewage systems can work again.

The Athens mayor, assessing the mood of the people in Baghdad, said they seemed even more determined to resist after four weeks of bombardment.

"They are suffering, but they feel deeply that some injustice has befallen them and they become more stubborn and determined about it. This is a frightening thing because they know that they are facing an extraordinary

power that can eliminate anything, and they are reacting in an angry way," he said.

Mr. Tritis said that after a bombing raid Saturday night thousands of people turned out Sunday morning to inspect the damage to one of the bridges over the Tigris River.

"They were cursing and shouting against the bombing, declaring their determination to resist. They appeared ready to lynch their enemies."

"I had a feeling of fear that this hell can go on for a long time," said Mr. Tritis.

He said that because of the lack of fuel "people have started chopping down the trees lining the avenues, ruining the beautiful environment."

"They have no choice: it is as if they are in a state of siege."

Mr. Tritis visited Baghdad as part of a tour of 11 historic Mediterranean and Middle Eastern capital cities to promote his initiative for the establishment of a permanent forum of their mayors.

"The idea is so that we can start communicating first as mayors, among ourselves, and deal with our cities' problems in war or in peace," he said.

Mr. Tritis served as both economics and environment minister in the former Socialist government of Premier Andreas Papandreu.

He resigned to protest the involvement of other ministers in financial scandals.

Following his visits to Amman and Baghdad he plans to visit Beirut, Cairo, Damascus, Kuwait, Nicosia, Tehran, Tel Aviv and Riyadh.

Desert Storm moves no Saudi landmark

By Peter Bale
Reuters

BAHRAIN — The idea that jeep-driving American women soldiers will make for a new liberal, democratic Saudi Arabia is a fallacy, according to a prominent Saudi diplomat and intellectual.

Ghazi Al Gosaibi told Reuters Americans and conservative Saudis overrated the cultural impact of Operation Desert Storm if they thought it would leave a lasting impression on Islamic Saudi Arabia.

"I think this is a pipe dream for those who wish it or for those who are afraid of it," Mr. Gosaibi, Riyadh's ambassador to Bahrain, said in an interview Sunday.

"This society has very strong convictions and a very strong tradition," he said. "It will evolve in its own way, impervious to a temporary presence. How long are they going to stay, a few months. The desert has seen greater things come and go."

Change brought by the Gulf war to push Iraq from Kuwait will not be sparked by liberal-minded U.S. troops but by growing confidence among Gulf states, he said.

The home of the two holiest shrines in Islam, Saudi Arabia had many pressures and responsibilities both domestically and from the rest of the Islamic World.

"Our own society will determine the pace," Mr. Gosaibi said.

Gestures like that last November when 39 Riyadh women gave their chauffeurs the day off and drove their cars were in danger of inflaming strict fundamentalist Saudis.

"This was a very stupid thing, bordering on insanity for a limited number of ladies to attempt to drive... all they did was antagonise the population and all it did was raise unjustified fears in some members of the society, distorting the total overall progress we have achieved," Mr. Gosaibi said.

A former minister for industry and for health in the Saudi government, Mr. Gosaibi said

women had made great advances in Saudi society over the past 20 years.

More than one million young women had gone through school since 1965 when none had been permitted to attend. Saudi Arabia had many women doctors, civil servants and engineers.

This we did without the presence of American and multinational forces," Mr. Gosaibi said. "We did it in our own fashion, we did it through dialogue."

Mr. Gosaibi said Saudi Arabia was deeply misunderstood by the Western world which equated fundamentalism with extremism and an oil-based economy with greedy oil sheikhs in bogus states.

The Gulf war was proving the legitimacy of Gulf kingdoms, emirates and sultanates, not their weakness.

"This crisis, which is as violent as any society could expect is proving that these societies are viable," he said.

"Where ever you turn in the Gulf you find confidence... that our people can fight, for the first time we entered large-scale battles, for the first time our pilots are engaging in aerial combat, for the first time we have proved that these are not artificial entities," Mr. Gosaibi said.

"These are societies with deep roots. These are not oil sheikhs getting their legitimacy through oil. These are governments that have been there for years — the Al Sabah have been in Kuwait for 250 years," he said.

Mr. Gosaibi questioned predictions of a surge for democracy among Gulf states and Saudi Arabia once Iraq was driven out of Kuwait.

The Saudi royal family headed by King Fahd was already responsive to public opinion through petitions, local courts and the Islamic Sharia legal system.

"We don't need democracy in the Western sense... we have a different tradition of consensus..." Mr. Gosaibi said.

Saudis were satisfied with their lot and building a new predominantly middle class society, he said.

Sabah regime rules out parliament return

MANAMA, Bahrain (AP) — Kuwait's ousted government has ruled out a quick return of the parliament it dissolved in 1986, setting itself on a collision course with pro-democracy activists.

In Monday's announcement, the toppled government also refused the activists' request for speedy elections in a Kuwait freed from Iraqi control.

The activists accused the ruling Al Sabah family of breaking its promise to bring democracy to a free Kuwait and said they would soon meet to form a 60-member national front that will challenge the Al Sabahs.

Ahmad Al Khatib, an opposition leader and former parliamentarian, said he was surprised by the government announcement.

"I never expected they would say something like this in public," he said by telephone from London. "We always expected they would wait until we were all back in Kuwait."

The announcement was made at the toppled government's headquarters in Taif, Saudi Arabia, by its minister of information, Bader Al Yacoub.

"We will be entering a country which is devastated and destroyed by the enemy," he said in a statement. "It is not possible to conduct elections on the spot and we may need a martial law government."

Opposition leaders had said they believed the Sabah regime intended to set up a martial law government to preside over Kuwait's "reconstruction." That, they say, violates the country's 1962 constitution.

The opposition has also demanded elections within six months of a return to Kuwait. Mr. Yacoub said setting an election date "would be up to the political leadership."

The government's announcement exacerbated political divisions that have been simmering since the war began Jan. 17.

Two weeks ago, opposition figures accused it of reneging on promises to move towards democracy made during a conference in October in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

At the conference, the two sides shelved their differences and agreed to work for the liberation of Kuwait under the leadership of the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, whose family has ruled what is now Kuwait since 1759.

Opposition figures now say they feel they have been used by the ruling family in its attempts to gain legitimacy in the eyes of Kuwaitis. "We are nothing but window-dressing," Mr. Khatib said.

If the shaky alliance between the ruling family and opposition collapses, Kuwait could face difficulties in rebuilding and face political turmoil, a prospect with implications for the whole region.

One fear is that a serious challenge to the Al Sabah family would be initiated by opposition groups in neighbouring states whose populations have recently been exposed to Western culture and politics as never before.

The Gulf, which sits atop 60 per cent of the world's oil reserves, is dominated by countries like Saudi Arabia that are ruled by hereditary dynasties.

Kuwait once boasted the Arab World's only free press and freely elected parliament, although only 62,000 males out of an estimated 750,000 Kuwaitis could vote. In 1986, however, the Al Sabahs dissolved the national assembly that had been elected the previous year and slapped restrictions on the press.

It said then that a spate of bombings by pro-Iranian extremists and an aborted attempt on the emir's life made parliament a dangerous luxury.

U.S. soldiers confront another enemy — fear

KHAFJI, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Trembling, Jeff Brown recounted how he hid from Iraqi patrols while on reconnaissance in Khafji, at times calling in artillery "on my head" before scooting to hide somewhere else.

"There wasn't a minute I wasn't scared," Brown said moments after he escaped from the Saudi border town in Jan. 31 during the biggest ground battle of the war with Iraq. "It was difficult, but we had to put that aside and do the job."

On another reconnaissance team in Khafji was Corporal Shuck Ingraham of New Orleans, who said the marines "we shaking for two days from cold and fear. ... I'd be lying if I (said) that dying hadn't crossed my mind."

Brown and Ingraham were far from alone in being forced to confront fear.

As thousands of troops fight for the first time and thousands more prepare for war, anxiety takes many shapes, from the widespread fear of dying to nagging doubts about letting their buddies down in combat.

Others worry they will never again see parents, wives and children. Still others fear they will return home unappreciated, like after Vietnam. The threats of "terrorism," chemical warfare or being maimed also incite concern.

Many young Americans fighting the war try to mask their fear. Combat Veterans take another approach.

"You're supposed to be scared to death," said Capt. Brent Smith, 33, of Marine. Smith is a veteran of the marine deployment in Lebanon, where 241 U.S. servicemen were killed in a 1983 attack.

Among the more than 500,000 U.S. troops in the region, there are perhaps as many ways of dealing with fear as there are sources.

Many carry Bibles. Others sit with friends and commanders, or perhaps a chaplain, discussing their fears.

"If you are not a little afraid, you could do something stupid," said Army Staff Sgt. Thomas Gray, 27, of Nebraska, a squad leader in an infantry platoon who urges his men to discuss their fear.

Some are told to keep their fear to themselves to keep from frightening others.

"It is considered common courtesy not to talk about how scared you are," said Pvt. Thomas Schneider, 24, of Missouri, a member of the first Infantry Division. "If one guy gets depressed about it, the next guy catches it from him."

"I'd be lying if I said I'm not scared to death," Marine Capt. Kevin Monahan, 26, of San Francisco, said during a brief retreat the battle of Khafji. "We have no idea where the Iraqis are. But we're going back. We've still got guys in there who are counting on us."

Lebanese religious leader blames Arab apathy for war

CANBERRA (R) — A senior Lebanese executive of the World Council of Churches said Tuesday that political apathy among Arabs was one of the reasons for the Gulf war.

"The Arabs must bear part of the responsibility of this crisis," Ghassan Rubieiz, secretary of the council's Middle East section, told its seventh assembly.

"It is my view that Arab regimes get away with a lot of deviance and their people, my people, remain too tolerant and quiet about their oppressive predicament."

"Resources are mismanaged, human rights are violated, borders are trampled upon, wars are easily started, authority tends to amount to force."

Mr. Rubieiz said if Arabs were more politically active they could have prevented not only the current Gulf war, but the earlier conflict between Iraq and Iran.

He criticised Arab oil-producing countries for their relationship with the West, particularly the United States.

"The West has befriended

some countries in the region not on the basis of democratic values but on the basis of economic exploitation," he said.

"The symbiosis of the West and the oil-producing countries of the region has brought cheap oil, lucrative arms selling and a super-power client state system."

"The Arab oil countries are perhaps the only countries in the world which pay for imperialism — they pay to be occupied."

Rubieiz said Israel had a right place in the Middle East, but criticised the Jewish state over the Palestinian question.

"Israel has decided to return to the region and this is important, it must be a part of the region," he said.

"But Israel seeks security through the acquisition of force and land and money. It does not invest enough in building a partnership with the Palestinian people."

The World Council of Churches meets every seven years to formulate religious policy. The assembly runs until Feb. 20.

Media, military battle over access

DHAHRAN (AP) — The media and the military, never the best of friends, are engaged in an escalating battle over the journalists' right to cover the war and the military's concerns over security.

In the past two weeks at least a dozen reporters and photographers have been detained by military personnel after trying to gather stories outside the official press pools, groups of reporters travelling under military escort.

Veteran journalists who have covered wars in Vietnam and other nations over the past two decades say the actions of the U.S. military are among the most restrictive they've experienced.

In one case, an Associated Press writer and photographer were held six hours by a U.S. army unit. They were given dinner, shown air strikes and provided with glimpses of camp life that generated a story.

In another, Wesley Booke, a photographer on assignment for Time Magazine, was held for 30 hours by a U.S. National Guard unit, at times blindfolded and interrogated.

On Sunday, New York Times reporter Chris Hedges was detained by U.S. military police for six hours and his credentials were temporarily lifted after he tried to ask officials at a military hospital for permission to conduct an interview.

"I was told I violated the agreement (the military ground rules) by coming into a front line area unescorted," said Hedges. "It's true I talked to soldiers. But I was in a civilian area doing a story about the local economy."

His credentials — issued by Saudi Arabia — were returned the next day.

CBS newsmen Bob Simon and three crew members disappeared two weeks ago while travelling unescorted near the Kuwaiti border. They have not been seen since.

With nearly 800 journalists vying for a mere 126 spots on the various press pools, many reporters and photographers have struck off on their own to find something to photograph or write about.

The alternative is to rely on reports written by the pools.

The military contends that according to ground rules set by U.S. authorities, reporters and photographers cannot interview military personnel unless escorted by a public affairs officer.

Secretary Dick Cheney and General Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who discussed tactics with allied commanders in Saudi Arabia, Mr. Bush said.

"The air campaign has been very effective and it will continue for awhile."

But military analysts said another long wait might blunt the fighting edge of allied troops who have spent up to six months in Saudi Arabia preparing for war.

The start of the desert dust storm season was barely a month away and growing international alarm over the intensity of the blitz of Iraq could also force a decision on a ground campaign.

Mr. Bush insisted to reporters: "We're going to take whatever time is necessary to sort out when a next stage might begin."

The sorting-out included meetings Tuesday with the defence ministers of Britain and France, his main Western partners in the 28-nation anti-Iraq alliance.

Mr. Bush said he would listen to his military advisers and others before deciding whether to order a ground assault.

"If they come to me and say there needs to be another phase, then I will make that decision because that is a decision for the president of the United States."

Driver recounts horror on Baghdad-Amman road

By Mariam M. Shalhin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Baghdad-Amman road seems to have become a road where history or legends are born nowadays. Refugees and truck drivers tell stories of machine-gun fire aimed at them from low flying planes, with Saudi flags on them. And now one truck driver speaks of seeing seven American soldiers holding up a car full of Jordanian women to "take their car."

Subhi Naaman, a Jordanian taxi driver who drove from Baghdad to Amman about 12 days ago says he witnessed "robbery" of a car belonging to a Jordanian family fleeing Kuwait by what looked like American soldiers.

As he passed the "hold up" on the main Baghdad-Amman road at 8:00 p.m., 35 kilometres from Al Rutbah, the soldiers saw him and opened fire, wounding him in the right arm and forcing his car off the road.

"When they saw me they opened fire," Mr. Naaman says. "My nephew was sitting next to me and I drove on." Naaman remembers.

"I didn't feel anything at first, all I wanted was for us to get through... then after we drove through the soldiers chain on the street I noticed planes overhead, the street right in front of us was hit and 'boom' our car drove into

the crater," Naaman recalls. Naaman's car-riddled with bullets and now in the crater — saw little else till a convoy of Jordanians fleeing Baghdad found him near the road.

Among the refugees were the family that had been robbed of their car, they had come with relatives who had been driving behind them. According to Naaman the family said that the soldiers were Americans and wanted their car to return to Saudi Arabia. The Jordanian family were told not to speak about the incident. Arriving at the Al Rutbah hospital about 100 kilometres from the Jordanian border, Naaman and the affected Jordanians told Iraqi officials of the incident with the American soldiers.

"They took the information and went off," Naaman says of the Iraqi reaction. The hospital at Al Rutbah was full of people who had been injured by the allied bombing of the Baghdad-Amman road.

"There were many Jordanians," Naaman said. "The family who was the victim and first hand eyewitness to the hold-up are in Irbid according to Naaman. As for his future, Naaman is waiting for his arm to heal at the University Hospital so he can continue his work along the Amman-Baghdad road."

MIDDLE NEWS IN BRIEF

Earth tremor shakes Istanbul

ISTANBUL (R) — A moderate earthquake shook buildings, rattled windows and knocked out telephone lines in Istanbul Tuesday, causing panic among some of the Turkish city's eight million residents. The quake struck at 11.58 a.m. (0958 GMT) and registered 4.8 on the open-ended Richter scale, an official at the geological centre at Bosphorus University said. She said the tremor was centred in the sea of Marmara south of Istanbul. There were reports of casualties or major damage. "It was like a strong kick and we got panicky," said one Istanbul woman. The Anatolian news agency said the tremor lasted about six seconds and sent some residents fleeing their homes in panic. It was also felt in surrounding towns and villages. As many as 20 minor earthquakes shake Istanbul each day, but the city has not been hit directly by a major quake in modern times. Three major faultlines run through Turkey, which has been hit by 53 major quakes this century.

New group of refugees flee to Iran

NICOSIA (R) — A new batch of 370 refugees escaping allied air raids on Iraq crossed into Iran, the Iranian news agency IRNA said Tuesday. The new arrivals from Sudan, Yemen and Vietnam were given temporary shelter at the western border crossing of Khosravi. Iran has reported receiving 4,110 expatriate refugees and 105 Iraqis since the Gulf war began on Jan. 17.

Israeli soldiers train in Germany

BONN (AP) — More than 30 Israeli soldiers began a special training programme Monday to learn how to combat chemical weapons, officials said. The Defence Ministry, in a statement, said 32 Israeli soldiers would train from Tuesday until March 8 at the German military chemical weapons training facility in Sontheim, in southern Germany near the Austrian border. The government on Jan. 30 agreed to send Israel eight armoured fox vehicles designed to detect chemical weapons. They were part of an estimated one-billion-mark (\$689 million) supply and material package which Germany has promised to Israel. In addition, the government has given Israel 250 million marks (\$172 million) in humanitarian aid. And on Monday, the Ministry of Economic Cooperation gave the Israeli ambassador to Bonn a check for five million marks (\$3.1 million) to help Tel Aviv and nearby neighbourhood rebuild from Iraqi missile attacks.

Britain has asked Belgium for help

BRUSSELS (R) — Britain has asked Belgium for cash and equipment to support its forces in the Gulf, a Belgian Foreign Ministry spokesman said Monday. But the spokesman declined to comment in a report in Belgium's Belang van Limburg newspaper which put the value of the request at 1.2 billion francs (\$20 million). "It was a request for financial assistance which has been partially converted into a list of concrete needs," the spokesman said. Britain asked for the support early last week, he said, adding that no decision had yet been made. Belgian Prime Minister Wilfried Martens said in an interview published last Friday Belgium was wrong to refuse an earlier British request for ammunition for its Gulf troops. Belgium has contributed two minehunters and a frigate to the naval force monitoring a U.N. embargo on trade with Iraq.

'Russian heard on Iraqi military airwaves'

PARIS (R) — A French newspaper said Tuesday Gulf war allies had monitored Russian being spoken on Iraqi military airwaves during the last 48 hours. Liberation said in an article from Riyadh the report had been confirmed by Saudi diplomats and several senior officers from different armed forces in the international coalition. The French daily said the information heard was classified as secret, but it was of a military nature and conversations monitored were apparently, between senior military officials. "The sources doubt that it could be Russian-speaking Iraqis. In this case it involves Soviets, present in the midst of Iraqi armed forces and speaking to each other," Liberation's reporter Francois Cane said.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

PRAYER TIMES

06:59 Fajr
06:17 (Sunrise) Doha
11:58 Dhuhr
14:55 'Asr
17:23 Maghrib
18:41 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swatish, Tel. 810740
Assumption of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Ascension Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Ascension Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 623563, Tel. 628543
Assumption Catholic Church Tel. 771331

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be partly cloudy and another rise in temperatures will take place.
Min./Max. temp.
Amman 5 / 17
Aqaba 11 / 25
Deraa 3 / 18
Jordan Valley 10 / 23
Yesterday's high temperature: Amman 15, Aqaba 24. Humidity readings:

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN
Dr. Adnan Al-Zughair 895240
Dr. Youssef Radadi 963021
Dr. Ahmad Al-Dagani 676473
Dr. Abdul Qader Al-Lala 695048
Pines Pharmacy 661912
Petersons pharmacy 778336
Al-Azma pharmacy 670555
Nasrallah pharmacy 626672
Al-Salam pharmacy 636730

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN 43 per cent, Aqaba 35 per cent.
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsani pharmacy 637660
BRID:
Dr. Mazen Abu Baker (-)
Al-Sharara pharmacy (278625)
ZARQA:
Dr. Rabah Al-Borini (-)
Khalifa pharmacy 963417

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

RUSSIA
Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire 97122
Blood Bank 77121
Highway Police 943402
Traffic Police 863930
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 635800
Police Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdullah Telephone Repairs 661101

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Response 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

RUSSIA
Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire 97122
Blood Bank 77121
Highway Police 943402
Traffic Police 863930
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 635800
Police Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdullah Telephone Repairs 661101

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 660100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Company 603681
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN
Hamad Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn. 64241/2
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn. 64241/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642462
Molva, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsani 6611714

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Shamsani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Sharara Hospital 6622719
The Islamic, Abdali 6661217
Al-AM, Abdali 6641646
Islam, Al-Mahajira 777191/3
Al-Balad, J. Amman 775111/26
Army, Madia 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 6024820
Amal Hospital 674125
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)991071
Bin Sina Hospital (0

Iranian parliamentary team arrives today

AMMAN (J.T.) — An Iranian parliamentary delegation is due to arrive from Syria Wednesday for talks with Jordanian parliamentarians over the situation in the Gulf. The delegation is carrying a message from the speaker of Iran's parliament to Dr. Abdulatif Arabiyat, Speaker of the Jordan House of Parliament, and will meet with Jordanian members of parliament, according to a report by the Jordan news agency, Petra.

The visit comes in the wake of a visit to Tehran last week by a group representing the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan including parliament members.

The arrival of the Iranian parliamentarians coincides with the convening here of a session by the Jordan House under the chairmanship of Dr. Arabiyat following the last session on Sunday during which the situations in the Gulf and the occupied Arab territories were discussed. Arabiyat sent cables on the situation in the Israeli-held Arab lands to the United Nations Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, the

United Nations Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, the U.N. General

Assembly President, Chairman of the U.N. Security Council, Chairman of the U.N. Human Rights Committee and Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), expressing concern over the blanket curfew imposed by the Israeli occupation authorities on the Palestinian people.

In his cable, Arabiyat said the Israeli-imposed curfew on Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip constitutes a flagrant violation of Human Rights and the United Nations charter and other international laws, as well as the Geneva IV Convention on the protection of civilians under occupation.

The House condemned the arrest of Palestinian figures and intellectuals, describing it as violating the simplest principles of justice. Arabiyat warned of the grave consequences of the blanket curfew on all West Bankers.

Uncertain future awaits evacuees

By Mariam M. Shabin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AZRAQ — An hour's drive away from Amman, between the sand dunes and the sun, 646 refugees from Iraq have found a makeshift home which will protect them from the cold nights and allied bombings.

The makeshift homes are tents donated by one of several dozen relief organisations which have rushed to the aid of refugees fleeing war-torn Iraq and Kuwait.

The washing facilities are outdoors and food is rationed, but most refugees stay for only a few nights making the stay bearable.

For some of the refugees however, the stay seems to be a long one. Somalis and Iraqis, many of Kurdish origin, are here along with Indians, Yemenis and Sudanese, whose return home seems relatively quick and easy when compared to the fate of their fellow refugees.

The Somalis, who have been here for up to four months, cannot go back to their country because a vicious war is being waged there. The 160 Somalis at Azraq belong to the same tribe in northern Somalia. "We are from the Shamalia," said 15-year-old Saad. Shamalia means No-ill, and Saad, like many of the children of the Somali migrant workers, was born in Kuwait.

"I have been in Kuwait for twelve years," says Abu Mohammad. "I worked as a school-bus driver at the Farashah School and supported my family," he says. Abu Mohammad has his mother, wife and five children with him in the camp.

The children are bored and tired, 12, who speaks perfect English, says he misses school. "I miss doing something and he is waiting to return to Somalia so that we can start school again," said Saad.

But returning to Somalia may be much more difficult than most Somalis think. They say that the United Nations has promised to take care of them until the war in Somalia ends. But all agree that now, there seems to be no end in sight.

Abu Mohammad says he tried to take his family to Syria, but the Syrians would not let him at the border. "We tried to go to Damascus two months ago but

we came back here to wait what will happen... soon the winter will be over and the weather will be better.

Down three rows of tents from the now veteran Somali refugees, are the Iraqis.

Over 60 Iraqis, of Kurdish, Turkish and Persian origins, who came to Jordan between Jan. 22 and 29 from Iraq are now in Azraq.

They are in fact, two-time refugees. Most of the sixty or so people fled political and ethnic persecution in Iraq to take refuge in Iraq in the mid 1980's. Now, not being able to return to Iraq because they feel they may be "killed" there, they have sought refuge in Jordan.

Belonging to mostly leftist opposition groups in Iraq, the refugees say that Iraq gave them sanctuary when they were on the run from the Iranian regime.

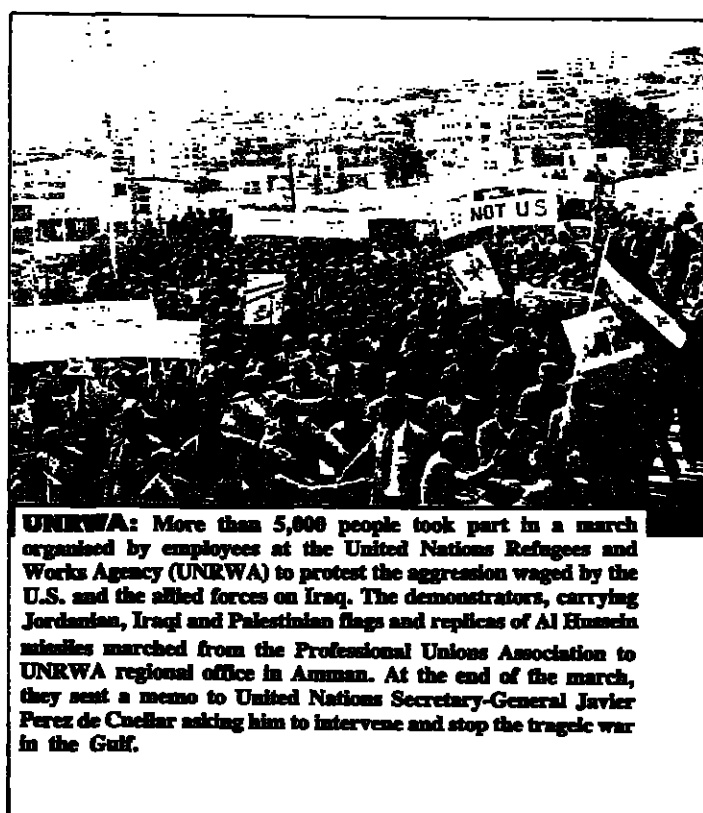
"We lived in the Babylonian Province in Iraq, but I had to leave Iraq because I was a member of the Kurdish Communist Party, the Korala, and I ran for member from Iraq. When the Americans hit Iraq I ran for my life again," says Yousef from the northern Iranian province of Kurdistan.

Yousef says he never felt persecuted in Iraq as a Kurd or as a Communist. "But I do have a problem now, I have no passport," he says. "I left Iran on foot and I left Iraq on foot to come to Jordan," Yousef says laughing.

"When I left Iran I had no documents and now I have no documents, the UNHCR is helping us find countries to seek asylum in like Sweden, Canada or Germany."

Yousef says 50,000 Iraqis still live in Iraq having been given political asylum there and they will not be able to return to Iraq, he says. "There are 50,000 Iraqis in Amman, some are political refugees and others just fled the war in Iraq, but many will not be able to return to Iraq under the present government for fear of persecution," says Yousef.

The sixty Iraqis like the 160 Somalis wait in the cold of the Azraq night and as they watched the 106 Indians and 93 Sudanese drive off today in buses which will take them to chartered planes bound for "home", they wondered when, and if, their turn will ever come to catch a flight to a secure, safe, freedom.



UNRWA: More than 5,000 people took part in a march organised by employees at the United Nations Refugee and Works Agency (UNRWA) to protest the aggression waged by the U.S. and the allied forces on Iraq. The demonstrators, carrying Jordanian, Iraqi and Palestinian flags and replicas of Al Hussein, marched from the Professional Unions Association to UNRWA regional office in Amman. At the end of the march, they sent a memo to United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar asking him to intervene and stop the tragic war in the Gulf.

Officials congratulate King

AMMAN (Petra) — Senior Jordanian officials and representatives of official and public institutions Monday sent cables of congratulation to His Majesty King Hussein on the occasion of Al Israa Wal Miraj anniversary.

They expressed in their cables their appreciation and admiration of King Hussein's national role at the current stage and affirmed their full support for his policy.

The cables were sent to His Majesty by Prime Minister Mudar Badran, Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament, Ahmad Al Lawzi, Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament, Abdul Latif Arabiyat, Armed Forces Chief of Staff, General Fathi Abu Taleh, the chief judge, the mayor of Amman as well as directors of the public security, civil defence and general intelligence departments.



SOUTHERNERS: Some demonstrators wave to the photographer as they continue their march to Al Mazar.

Thousands of Karakis voice support for King, air anger at U.S.

KARAK (J.T.) — Thousands of Jordanians in the southern region of Karak marched Tuesday in protest against the allied aggression on Iraq and condemning U.S. policies in the Middle East region.

The march, staged after the Al Israa Wal Miraj religious ceremonies, extended for about six kilometers with protesters carrying posters supporting the Iraqi people, portraits of His Majesty King Hussein, Palestine President Yasser Arafat and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein as well as Jordanian, Iraqi and Palestinian flags.

Eyewitnesses said that the marchers burned an effigy of U.S.

President Bush and shouted slogans against the United States and its allies in the Gulf war.

The march was staged from Mnta to Al Mazar, two towns with sites of mosques commemorating Muslim leaders who died in 7th century A.D. battles between the Byzantine Empire and the Islamic Nation.

According to eyewitnesses no less than 15,000 people took part in the demonstration, and later attended a public rally where they issued a political statement voicing absolute backing for King Hussein's policies. The statement said that the allied forces came to the region not for the purpose of the so-called liberation of

Kuwait, but rather to lay their hands on Arab oil and to destroy the Iraqi military might and to protect Israel and its ambitious designs in the Arab World.

Several speakers addressed the rally expressing the Karak people's support for King Hussein and voicing their response to his call to rally for the defence of the homeland.

The marchers sent a cable to the U.N. Secretary General, denouncing the allied forces attack on Iraq as a brutal crime and accusing the U.N. organisation of being a tool in the hands of the United States and serving the colonial power's ambitions and aims.

Jordan Communist Party lauds King's national stand

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan Communist Party (JCP) Tuesday denounced "the devastating war against Iraqi people," hailed His Majesty King Hussein's address to the Nation Feb. 6 and urged the formation of a National Unity government.

"The domestic Arab and international campaign to stop the war must be widened," the JCP Central Committee said in a statement. Once war is stopped, "Arab and international negotiations must start to solve all the region's problems, whether in the Gulf or Palestine," it said.

The JCP Central Committee said it agreed with King Hussein's assessment of the aims of the war

and his perception of a new order in the region.

The JCP said it agreed with the King that "the real aim of the war is to establish a new regional order, based on the destruction of Iraq and rearranging the region's affairs in a way that puts the Arab countries and their resources under direct foreign hegemony."

It said it welcomed the King's call for an "order that ensures the right of all peoples for freedom and progress."

The JCP said the King's important national address expressed the views of all Jordanians, with all their political trends, in fending off all the dangers that threaten the Arabs.

"The concept of forming an

all-encompassing national unity government has become a necessity," the Communists said in their statement. They said a National Unity government would enable Jordan to effectively face the challenges of the war in the Gulf.

The Party also denounced Israeli arbitrary measures against Palestinians under occupation. It called on all the forces of peace and freedom to exert their efforts to end the Israeli curfew imposed on the Palestinians since the start of the Gulf war, Jan. 17.

The party also called for the enhancement of all Arab and world efforts to end the Gulf war and reach for a peaceful settlement.

Saudi Arabia relaxes entry restrictions to Jordanian expatriates

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Saudi Arabia has lifted a ban on some Arab expatriates, including Jordanians and Palestinians, working in the kingdom from returning there after vacation or trips abroad, informed airlines sources said Tuesday.

The sources said they were informed by their contacts in the Gulf states that the Saudi civil aviation authorities had informed all airlines that they could fly Jordanian, Palestinian, Yemeni and Sudanese expatriates to Saudi Arabia as long as the passengers had valid return entry visa.

An earlier circular had instructed the airlines that none of these nationals as well as Iraqis would be allowed into Saudi Arabia and that the carriers were responsible for their immediate departure from the kingdom.

Iraqis are not included in the reverse decision. All Iraqis need to get a prior clearance from the Saudi interior ministry for their return to the kingdom.

Dr. Samir Mutawa, public relations officer of Royal Jordanian (RJ), said he had not received any formal intimation of the Saudi move, but pointed out that Tuesday was a public holiday.

The sources told the Jordan Times the Saudi circular was dated Feb. 11.

The ban did not apply to those carrying dual nationalities, particularly American passport holders, since their work and residence permits were issued on the basis of their American documents.

A ban on Jordanian trucks who carry produce and other goods into Saudi Arabia from Jordan remained in place, transport industry sources said. This ban went into effect late September but exceptions were made when the Jordanian government had moved in protest and imposed a ban on all trucks from entering Saudi Arabia through Jordanian territory. This resulted in an outcry in the Gulf states, traditional consumers of fruit and vegetables from Jordan, the occupied territories, Syria and Turkey.

Subsequently, the Saudis allowed Jordanian trucks to pass through their territory but imposed a ban on all imports from Jordan and the occupied territories.

However, the ban on all Jordanian trucks was imposed last month.

About 140,000 Jordanians used to work in Saudi Arabia before the Gulf crisis erupted in August.

Resident of Abu Nseir heat up 'cold dialogue' for boiler system

By Nur Sati
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Imagine waking up first thing in the morning only to find a rush of cold water cascading from the hot water tap. The people of Abu Nseir, a suburb north of Amman, have been waking up to this for the past three years. Now the 3,000 villagers are trying to come to an agreement with the Housing Corporation about a suitable boiler system.

But many in the town have just about given up, saying that their "pleas with the Housing Corporation have fallen on deaf ears."

The main problem affecting the heating systems is financial, according to a woman, 36, with six children. "Every group of six buildings has one boiler. Sharing the boiler is not a problem but when someone uses it for 20 hours and another person uses the boiler for eight hours and still both are paying the same amount for the heating, then that is a problem," the woman said.

What if a meter could be installed and everyone would pay according to the heating they use? The woman answered, "it is not so simple. When you have a group of 60 houses sharing one boiler, that means that half the

houses will not get hot water because the houses are built very far away from one another."

Nashat Asfour, a resident, said most of the meters do not function. "The Corporation told us that the best way to pay for the heating was in accordance with the size of the houses, so a smaller apartment would pay less than I do even if they keep the boiler running for a longer time."

Another housewife who did not wish to be named said, "to buy our own boiler costs us JD 40 a month. Most of us here have an average of five children with a salary of JD150 per month."

According to Ajwad Batayneh, an architect living in Abu Nseir, the problem of the boiler system originates from the engineers of the whole complex at the village. He maintained that "the first mistake was that the Corporation built the suburb specifically for the middle class." What happened, he added, was that all brackets of society began residing in the town, which means that "we had different people who had different ideas about heating systems."

Batayneh asked why should some people have to pay between JD 20-30 or even JD 40 a month for a boiler when they can pay JD 2-3 a month for kerosene heaters?

"When some people refused to pay for the boilers the Corporation closed off the heating," he explained that to have the boiler working, the Corporation asked for 70 per cent of the group of 60 buildings to participate.

When the apartments were built in 1986, economic problems were just beginning in the country. The standard of living shot up. "The people of Abu Nseir thought that by residing in that suburb, they would save a lot of money. But now I am paying more than 30 per cent of my income as monthly installments for the apartment while it should not be more than 20 per cent in normal economic conditions," Batayneh told the Jordan Times.

"The boiler system was made in an equally ill-planned fashion," said a resident of Abu Nseir. Asfour added that "the Housing Corporation didn't want to operate the boiler themselves."

Although the Corporation promised to fix the meters, according to Batayneh, "they failed to do so." But the director of the Housing Corporation, Khaled Mattar, said that "we could not do anything about it. We told the people to pay and they refused. A group of houses could share and make a deal but it did not work."

Now Abu Nseir has formed committees of the residents so that issue can be solved. Though this was seen as a haven on the part of the residents, the committees had to overcome certain problems.

A resident who preferred

anonymity explained that, "when the committees were formed, we asked the Housing Corporation to hand in the boilers to us, but special conditions were asked from us. The committee member told the Jordan Times that the Housing Corporation wanted the committee to pay an electricity fee of JD 150 as well as paying all other electricity bills. Another request was to pay for the fuel oil in the boilers."

Meanwhile, the committee found out that since the meter was not functioning, "estimates for the price of fuel oil were based on paying for the two tonnes of fuel, known as dead energy," the committee member said. "This is unusable because it stays at the bottom of the boiler." According to committee members, all the fuel oil paid for by the subscribers and the committee members previously. Now the Corporation is asking for additional pay.

The Housing Corporation, however, declined to answer. But a resident commented that "the Corporation collected money in excess of 30 per cent in this way." He added that "this meant that subscribers were paying an extra cost."

The battle continues. As the summer season is closer, the residents have something to look forward to. But the committee members are trying to solve the issue for the coming winter. "If each boiler was shared by three or four buildings, I think it would solve a lot of problems," Batayneh said. "The owners could work it out between themselves."

U.S. society asks Jordan to help reach prisoners of war in Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian Red Crescent Society (JRCS) has been approached by the American Red Cross Society to help the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to reach American prisoners of war in Iraq. It said it was willing to oblige.

JRCS Vice President, Dr. Ahmad Mitlak Al Hadid, in a statement Tuesday said he received a message from the Red Cross Society in this regard notifying him that the city was delegating Mr. to Richards Dole's executive to Amman for talks with U.S. officials on the matter. Further steps can be made, he hopes that the JRCS will contact the Iraqi Red Crescent Society to arrange for a meeting of the two sides to pave the way for the ICRC visit to the area of war, mostly airmen

whose warplanes were shot down by Iraqi air defenses, said Hadid.

The Iraqi and the U.S. sides gave conflicting reports about the number of downed American planes and the captured or killed airmen, but the United States said Tuesday that 58 of the allied forces including Americans were captured or missing in ground battles. It also admitted the loss of 23 of its airmen while taking part in bombing raids against Iraqi targets.

Dr. Hadid expressed hope that the two parties will respect the Geneva Conventions specially the Fourth Convention which provides for the protection of civilians during wartime so that the JRCS can exert efforts to help the ICRC reach the prisoners of war on both sides.

Hadid expressed JRCS's readiness to contact Dr. Ibrahim Al Nouri, head of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society, to pave the way

for a dialogue that would open the way for the ICRC to visit the American prisoners of war.

The JRCS had earlier arranged for various Red Cross societies to contact their nationals in Iraq when they were held by the Iraqi authorities prior to the outbreak of the war, and also arranged for essential supplies and medicines to them through the Iraqi Red Crescent Society. Hadid said that these arrangements were conducted through the JRCS between Nov. 3 and 23, 1990.

For its part, JRCS has been raising contributions in Jordan for the benefit of the displaced Iraqi civilians on those affected by the war in Iraq.

Dr. Hadid announced that two groups of JRCS volunteers Tuesday headed for Iraq to work at the Ramadi Hospital. The first group, led by Dr. Nabih Moam-

mar, will hold talks with the Iraqi Red Crescent Society about its needs of medicine, medical equipment and children's food and will hand the Iraqi Society the third consignment of in-kind assistance contributed by the Jordanian people to the Iraqi people.

The consignment comprises medicines and medical equipment, Hadid said. The second group which comprises doctors, nurses and surgeons who will work for some time in Iraqi hospitals and are taking three ambulances to help them with their work.

Dr. Hadid said that the second group is heading straight to the Ramadi Hospital to deliver a shipment of medical requirements and to evacuate Jordanians and carry them back to Amman. The Jordanians were injured during allied bombing raids on the Amman-Baghdad road.

Gambler, turned murderer, to hang

AMMAN (J.T.) — A 30-year-old Jordanian named Talaat Mohammad Qasem from Al Wihdat camp has been sentenced to death by hanging for assassinating his uncle's wife, Sahirah Saleh, whilst stealing jewellery to squander the proceeds on gambling.

According to a statement by the Criminal Court, which passed the sentence, the murderer had been in the habit of gambling at one of Amman's cafes and borrowing more and more from one of his acquaintances.

At one point he had to steal some of the victim's jewellery to pay for his losses at the gambling table; but when the debts accumulated to reach JD 1000 he decided to steal all the jewellery and his grandfather's money which he knew was at his uncle's home.

Talaat knew that one day his

uncle and grandfather were going to be absent from home at hospital for a medical checkup, and he planned to steal the money on that day, said the statement. Qasem sneaked into the house but was confronted with his uncle's wife who began to scream which prompted him to attack her with a metal pipe and a knife to get rid of her before making off with the money and the jewellery.

According to the statement, however, the man to whom Talaat was indebted and who learnt about the murder soon after it was committed, reported the matter to the police who arrested the criminal.

The court statement said that the crime was committed last March, and the trial took almost 11 months before the sentence was passed. No date has yet been fixed for the execution.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

Gulf Peace Team appeals for urgent humanitarian relief to the civilian victims of war

The Gulf Peace Team (from the peace camp at Arar on the Iraqi-Saudi border) is hiring trucks for the urgent transport of medical supplies intended for the civilian victims of war in the region of Iraq and Kuwait. We plan to deliver these supplies to Baghdad within the next few days, in collaboration with the Red Crescent.

Starting at 12:00 today (Wednesday, 13 February), the trucks will be located opposite the Manar Hotel in Al-Shmeisani, ready for loading. Please bring your donations of non-perishable medical supplies to the site before Thursday, 14 February at 6:00 p.m.

The Gulf Peace Team is an international, independent, non-partisan group of individuals working for peace in the Middle East through non-violent means.

For further information, please contact the Gulf Peace Team at 665410/1 or at the Ammon Hotel (671133/4/5, Room 209).

Tel: 667171

Jordan Times

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Between justice, crime

FORMER U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark is an extraordinary voice for reason and justice and his judgments cannot be taken lightly. Having already distinguished himself as a man of the highest moral and intellectual calibre possible, Clark's assessment that his country is committing war crimes in Iraq must not be brushed aside but rather should give food for thought for all concerned. What Mr. Clark seems to be worried about most is the carpet U.S. aerial bombardment of Iraqi civilians targets that already caused extensive casualties and damage in contravention of the international humanitarian law as expressed in the Hague and Geneva conventions. According to reports, no less than six to seven thousand Iraqi civilians having lost their lives and probably double that number of civilians having lost their homes and means of livelihood, because of the savage bombardment of Iraq in the past four weeks. Since U.S. President George Bush was among the first to raise the subject of war crimes and was the first to level accusations against Iraqi President Saddam Hussein as having committed war crimes, he is invited to listen carefully to what Mr. Clark has been saying about the continuing atrocities being committed by the U.S. war machine in the Gulf theatre. The least that one would expect from Mr. Bush is to open wide the war file and address the issue from all its angles and dimensions. The subject of war crimes is indeed a very relevant issue to the Gulf war and deserves a thorough debate with optimum fairness and balance. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is well placed to investigate this matter in the field since it is the body entrusted with the task of observing the implementation of the Hague and the four Geneva conventions.

As Iraq and the U.S. are levelling accusations against each other as having committed war crimes, now is the time to invite the ICRC to investigate these allegations and to report back to the international community on its findings. There is an ICRC presence in Iraq and Saudi Arabia which can be extended to reach the other parts touched by the Gulf war, this could be the most effective way to keep a watchful eye on how the war in the Gulf region is being conducted and to gauge the extent of the adherence of the parties to the conflict to the spirit and letter of the relevant conventions. It is timely and fitting to remind the belligerents in the Gulf war that all mass destruction weapons including nuclear weapons are prohibited under Protocol 1 of the Geneva conventions even though the U.S. has yet to ratify that protocol. Having been ratified by the majority of the nations of the world, the principles of Protocol 1 have become an integral part of the international customary law. The U.S. will be better advised if it heeds the call of this internationally recognised norms and give them priority over its military objectives.

Otherwise it would commit the gravest of all war crimes that humanity has seen so far.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Egypt has decided to send two more divisions of its best troops to the Arabian Peninsula to fight Iraq raising the number of Egyptian soldiers to nearly 70,000, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Tuesday. The increase in the number of troops, the paper said, came in response to a call by the British foreign secretary during his recent visit to Cairo, and was a manifestation of Egypt's further hostile attitude towards the Arab Nation in general and Iraq in particular, said the paper. As the Egyptian troops are being sent to fight Iraq, Egyptian jails are being stuffed with thousands of Egyptian people opposing the Cairo regime and its hostile attitude towards the Arab people of Iraq, and standing against the conspiracy in which Hosni Mubarak is an active partner in service of world Zionism, the paper noted. What Egypt is doing now is an attempt to carry out the second phase of the Camp David accords signed by Anwar Sadat and approved by his successor to enable world Zionism to spread its hegemony on the Arab World, the paper continued. Britain, the United States, and Israel are now arriving to push the Egyptian forces in the Arabian Peninsula to the forefront to serve as sandbags protecting the British and U.S. soldiers from Iraq's attacks and causing Arabs to be killed by Arab hands and causing a double betrayal for the Arab Nation, the paper noted. The paper said that the good and honest people of Egypt can by no means allow the Cairo regime to pursue its present policies against the Arab Nation, and are bound sooner or later to put an end to such treachery.

Many voices were stifled during the ongoing Gulf war so as to facilitate the aggression and to cover up for the moves of the criminals now waging aggression on Iraq, says Mahmoud Al Rihawi in Al Ra'i daily Tuesday. Not only did the U.S.-Zionist political and military machinery succeed in silencing the media forcing it to propagate only official statements to the public, but it also had its way in stifling the United Nations Organisation where no voice was raised demanding a halt to the raids on the civilian population of Iraq, the columnist notes. Rihawi draws attention to the fact that Arab regimes influenced by the U.S.-Zionist alliance have closed universities, imprisoned intellectuals and writers and exercised a repressive rule over their masses lest voices can be raised against the criminal war on Iraq. Even the Arab League which was moved to Cairo and the Organisation of Islamic Conference which used to support just causes are kept away from the scene, and are prevented from interfering in the issue lest they can impose a peaceful solution to the crisis, the writer maintains. If the U.S.-Zionist alliance is right in the war on Iraq, and if it is the Security Council resolutions that are being implemented, then why should they fear anything? Rihawi asks. But, says Rihawi, it seems that the U.S.-Zionist alliance is afraid of the fact that its war on Iraq is designed to protect the backward regimes and the dictators who are maintaining repressive rules in their countries to serve their Zionist masters.

Altering the landscape of Arab history

By Lindsey Tanner
The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Allied bombing of Iraq is endangering one of the world's richest archaeological regions and treasures from the earliest civilisations, archaeologists and historians say.

"It's one of the more unfortunate places in the world where this could happen," said Mike Shoemaker, assistant editor of Biblical Archaeology Review, a Washington-based publication.

Baghdad, among the heaviest hit areas, is at the eastern edge of ancient Mesopotamia, a region between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers that was settled before 4000 B.C.

"It's where we have the first writing, it's where we have the first cities, it's where we have the first monumental architecture. All of these things are the base of all modern civilisation," said McGuire Gibson, a professor of Mesopotamian archaeology at the University of Chicago.

One of the most endangered sites is the Iraq National Museum in downtown Baghdad, where thousands of treasures such as clay writing tablets and jewelry are housed, Shoemaker said.

"What's most horrible about it is (that) it is located right next door to the main railroad station," Gibson said. "A television and radio station are within 150 metres of the museum."

A blast near the museum would likely damage its fragile treasures, Gibson said last week.

The Defence Ministry partially surrounds the Abbasid Palace, one of Baghdad's major standing monuments. The yellow brick structure, dating to about 1200 A.D., is one of Iraq's few intact historic monuments.

Gibson said he has been unable to contact museum workers and friends to find out the extent of bomb damage.

"I would guess there's been some damage because the Defence Ministry has been hit," he said.

Gibson said that in southern Iraq, an air base hammered by bombs is adjacent to the ancient city of Ur, said to have been the birthplace of the biblical patriarch Abraham.

Another endangered site is at Samarra, reportedly the site of a chemical weapons plant targeted by the allies about 144 kilometres north of Baghdad, Gibson said.

The remains of an Islamic city dating to 800 A.D. "are in very grave danger" there, he said.

Before war broke out on Jan. 16, noted archaeologist Robert McCormick Adams, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, predicted that no "calamitous" damage would be done to ancient sites except those near modern cities and other potential targets.

Gibson said the war forced him to cancel his annual winter research trip to Iraq.

"What you're going to do is alter the landscape to a point where... certain types of research that we do not will be able to be done again," he said.

Using United Nations to legalise destruction

By Dr. Abdalla Malki

THE U.N. Security Council is scheduled to meet late this night, probably behind closed doors, for deliberation on the war waged by the American-spearheaded alliance. The Americans and Britons were most reluctant to attend this meeting and long opposed its convening. That was very strange because it was the Security Council which mandated the American alliance to use necessary means to implement the council's resolutions relating to Kuwait. Mr. Bush picked up war of destruction as his favourite means. But he and his war alliance must report to the Security Council on the progress of work and how its resolutions are being implemented because the ultimate authority lies in the hands of the council. There is real danger that any party volunteering to implement the related resolution might mishandle. Thus going back to the council is necessary for the sake of respecting the council, its resolutions and the international legality in text and spirit.

The fact that Mr. Bush and company are very reluctant to go back to the council is very well understood and expected. The alliance has violated its terms of reference and went beyond the announced goal of liberating Kuwait to the genuine disguised one of destroying Iraq, in addition to inflicting heavy casualties among civilian individuals and targets. It is hard to discern how the liberation of Kuwait starts with the bombing, for example, of sewage, water and electricity networks in Baghdad and depriving its population from all municipal services.

Practically, Mr. Bush can order the scorching of every inch in Iraq and go as far as destroying Jordan, Iran or any other country in the vicinity, claiming that this is the way to liberate Kuwait. If he does that, nobody will be able to challenge him because there is no practical way to prove the contrary, not at least as the process of destruction is underway. The mandate given to Mr. Bush under Resolution 678 was so open, so general and deliberately loosely worded as to lead to that. Any member state is mandated to take whatever action under whatever banner to implement that resolution in whatever way it likes, without having to go back to the

council prior to that action or after it, and without being accountable for its execution or over-execution of that decision! Can anything be as strange, more dubious or more condemnable? Certainly, not, understandably because the United States wrote the decision which was tailored to its long-standing and well-guarded goal of destroying Iraq. It is really a sad day for the United Nations to serve as a conduit for "legalising" American designs of destruction and for furthering American domination of the world.

Mr. Bush blocked all the avenues to a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis and did his utmost to ensure that President Saddam Hussein does not agree to withdraw from Kuwait (remember John E. Mack and Jeffery Z. Rubin's article in Los Angeles Times two weeks ago?). Now, he is blocking all the roads to a ceasefire. Does the American public really know what their president is actually up to? In conclusion, please read the following two paragraphs extracted from an article by Mr. James H. Webb Jr., published in the Wall Street Journal Europe (Feb. 4, 1991).

"And what of those Arab allies, on behalf of whom we may soon be spending up to a billion dollars a day, as well as the blood of our finest young men and women? When the emir of Kuwait returns with his 70 wives and fleet of personal jets, bringing behind him the legion of young men who danced out the war in the discos of Cairo and London. The world is going to take a cool look at the uncomfortable totality of Mr. Bush's 'moral principle.' One need not be a pessimist to imagine a groundswell of anger directed at the royal families of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, from within both the Arab and Western communities."

"Internationally, allies and enemies alike must be wondering at the way this coalition was patched together, as well as at the principles on which the U.S. will conduct future policy. The Bush administration has dealt in extremes: payoffs to, rather than persuasion of, those who would support us; brute force rather than simple pressure against those with whom we disagree. The fallout from such an approach will become clearer when the bills come due, and when the next crisis appears."

LETTERS

Just the facts

To the Editor:

IT never crossed my mind that I would be writing a letter of this sort. Before coming back home my American friends often wondered if I was scared of living in Jordan. My reply was that Jordan has been, is, and will continue to be, a safe place. Lately though, and thanks to George Bush, I am having second thoughts...

First of all, I want to clarify that as a matter of principle I am against the acquisition of territory by force. On one hand, history has proven that most forms of occupation have been wrong and short-lived. On the other hand, Saddam Hussein has made the majority of Arabs proud, and has reminded the world of the often neglected Palestinian problem. For the past forty years, we Arabs have been mistreated, ignored, used and abused by the world's superpowers. Americans have made it quite clear that there is no room in the Middle East for a strong leader who would, God forbid, unite the Arabs! They want to control oil resources in the Gulf as well as look over Israel, their spoiled and pampered child.

It is frustrating as well as saddening to hear George Bush justify the Gulf war by claiming he intends to free Kuwait. If such a statement, which is an insult to anyone's intelligence, is in fact groundless, why then did George Bush send his troops over to the Gulf? Why is he risking the life of over 500,000 of his men? Even though the answers cannot be easily pin-pointed, here are some suggestions. First, and as previously stated, Americans believe that a strong leader in this region supposedly poses a threat to their economic interests. Memories of the 1973 oil embargo are still vivid in every American mind. Second, for the time being the cold war era is over, and the U.S. could not justify the presence of thousands of troops in Europe. Many legislators have been debating to cut defence spending by closing military bases in Europe and the United States. Therefore, a solution was to send those troops over to the Gulf, especially since the wealthy Gulf states were financing the war. Third, the American war industry does not survive without wars. This is simple common sense.

Boeing, McDonnell Douglas, General Dynamics, Northrop, and other companies' revenues are generated through the sale of weapons and war machines. To put it bluntly, no war, no money... Last but not least, this war also represented a golden opportunity for the Americans to control oil resources in the Gulf. In my opinion, the U.S. economy could weather the storm of increasing oil prices, but what about Japan and Europe? Having practically no oil reserves, the Europeans and the Japanese economies could be seriously afflicted by high prices and sharp shortages in oil supply. The Japanese and Europeans need not forget that, first, countries with no natural resources never become economic superpowers, and second, that as long as the United States controls the Gulf oil, Japan and Europe remain at its mercy. This undoubtedly is an unethical yet effective way for the American economy to regain some of the lost competitive edge!

I have attempted to put myself in Bush's unenviable shoes, trying to see from his vantage point, but to no avail. No economic, political, or social reason can justify warring the lives of millions of civilians, destroying a country in its entirety, and destabilising a whole region for many years to come. President Bush is wrong, very wrong if he thinks that he can bring stability and peace by waging a bloody war. Achieving peace through non peace is a contradiction in itself. Bush has repeatedly stated that this is the world and not only the U.S. versus Iraq; well, I find that hard to believe. This so-called "new world order" is nothing but a far-fetched true world order is established through common goals and objectives, and not through the almighty dollar. No Security Council resolution would have passed if the Soviet Union and China had exercised their veto rights. We can all envision what took place behind closed doors: if the latter two countries had voted against the U.N. Security Council resolutions, they would have received no economic aid from the United States or from any of the Gulf states. In other words, they were bought out. Is this what the "new world order" is all about...?

Let us not forget what happened at the advent of the crisis. President Saddam Hussein had promised that he would have withdrawn from Kuwait if there was no foreign intervention. His Majesty King Hussein had received a verbal promise from all Arab leaders, including Egypt's President Mubarak that Saddam would not be condemned by the Arab League and that a mini-summit would be held to resolve the crisis. Trusting his colleagues, His Majesty conveyed the message to President Hussein who in turn promised to withdraw. Yet, on His Majesty's way back to Jordan, the Arab League hastily met and condemned Iraq; a stab in the back. What happened? Why the sudden change in position? The U.S. had warned Mubarak that he too would receive no greenback if he did not publicly condemn Saddam. Surprise, surprise! Mubarak was also bought.

Why was the U.S. staunchly against an Arab solution? Why didn't they give us a chance to resolve our problems. Never in the history of the world have hundreds of thousands of troops been so rapidly mobilised. Never in the history of the U.N. have so many resolutions been passed against one country. Why this uncalled for sense of urgency? Why did it take the Americans four months to

come to the bargaining table, less than a week before the U.N. deadline? If anyone has caused this crisis to escalate to these extents, it is Bush and not Saddam. The Iraqis repeatedly stated that they were willing to negotiate if the Palestinian issue was addressed. Yet, George Bush refused to budge. He was neither willing to negotiate nor was he willing to link the two issues. The only reason he proposed that Tariq Aziz and James Baker meet was to tell the world community that every effort to resolve the crisis had been consumed. Baker went to Geneva not to negotiate, but to give Aziz an ultimatum, withdraw or face dire consequences!

Ironically, some are saying that the U.N. backed coalition is a victory for the United Nations. Is that so? The U.N.'s charter calls for promotion of peace and security and not for the implementation of war resolutions. If this is what the United Nations is all about, then I am sorry to say that we have hit rock-bottom! How come it took the United Nations only five months to enforce scores of resolutions against Iraq whereas for the past 23 years it has failed to implement two resolutions against Israel and its illegal occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Does it require a regionally devastating war to remind the world of the Palestinian people's plight? How many more young men and women's lives will be wasted before an international peace conference is held? Why has world media gone crazy over the Iraqi Scud attacks on Tel Aviv, but yet failed to mention the over eight hundred martyrs of the three-year-old Palestinian uprising? Why hasn't the U.N. been mobilised to enforce Resolution 242 and 338? How can the Americans contend that there is no linkage between the two issues? And when will the Americans realise that Saddam's call for a solution of the Palestinian problem is not only his but that of almost 200 million Arabs.

Mr. Bush and his Western allies need to understand it is high time they start treating the Arabs as fellow human beings. We are sick and tired of being looked down at. We are sick and tired of being constantly manipulated. Bush's humiliating threat to inflict bodily harm to Saddam ("Kick his..."), is a further example of the West's disrespect towards the Arabs. The treatment of Arabs as low lives with constant threats and ultimatums, will never lead to bargaining tables. The Western world need not worry about the state of affairs in the Middle East and the Gulf. Thank you but we do not need baby-sitters. After all, we have managed to run our business, and quite successfully may I add, long before the West knew what the word "civilisation" meant. On one hand, we can solve our own troubles and conflicts, on the other hand though, the West can help us resolve the one problem they helped create, namely Israel.

When told by reporters that an American general had suggested that the war would be over in four days, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan suggested: "If so, what will happen on the fifth day?" Doesn't Bush realise that even if he is the victor, the effects on the region will be traumatic and long-lasting. That he has destabilised this region for many years to come. That the environmental and ecological effects will be more short of devastating. That relations between the West and the Arabs have been seriously scarred and will take many years to heal. That this terrible war, more than any other conflict, will only breed hatred and radicalism, and will subsume all calls for moderation. It will be very hard to bring about peace in this region once again. Rebuilding on top of mountains of rubble is going to be an arduous task.

Marwan Jumaa,
Amman.

Disappointed

To the Editor:

I was interested to read Mr. Anthony Reeve's letter to the Jordanian Students Union on the subject of Iraqi detainees in Britain, as appeared in your paper on Feb. 7, 1991.

I have known Mr. Reeve as both ambassador and friend for a few years and was always impressed by his intellect, attitude and above all "Arab" hospitality. His understanding of the Middle East problems was mature. He was always compassionate and constantly curious. However, I found his response concerning the Iraqi detainees somewhat disappointing.

As I understand protocol and diplomacy, a diplomat is not responsible for setting the foreign policy of his country. Rather, he is the tool to implement such a policy, and it is totally up to him to choose the best method to carry out the set policy, while probably expressing his own influx and attitude into it.

This is where Mr. Reeve failed. His concern for human rights and his versatility with the Geneva Conventions should be commended. However, by being totally one-sided, he nullified any benefits his letter might have carried. Mr. Reeve should have been equally concerned with the 1.7 million Palestinians detained in their homes for nearly 3 weeks, in complete disaccord by Israel of any Geneva Convention. The shelling of Iraqi civilians and the vicious attacks on non-military targets in Iraq should have been matters of concern to the humanity-driven ambassador. I need not remind you of what Mr. Ramsey Clark said forcefully in Iraq that during his tour of Basra he only observed massive destruction of civilian quarters and annihilation of its people, in complete disregard to the Geneva Conventions. Mr. Reeve further failed to

show the least signs of discontent concerning the murderous act by the coalition forces that was committed against Jordanian truck drivers en route to Amman.

Mr. Reeve,

We do not blame you personally for acts committed by your country. But we at least expect that your humanity concerns extend to all parties and all people.

Humanity has no borders and should carry no barriers. This is where you failed and where your letter proved disappointing!

Izzat Dajani,
Amman.

Effective demonstrations

To the Editor:

NO DOUBT that the Gulf crisis has helped in removing masks and disguises, especially after the peace symbol of the U.N. was removed and substituted for war drums beaten by U.S. President Bush who claims that he wants to put the world in a new order; isn't that ridiculous? From what we observe, he is causing only great chaos that reflects all signs of disorder, and contradicts common sense calls for solving America's domestic problems instead of creating new ones in faraway lands. As war goes on one realises that the Zionised West is serving only the Israeli interests in the region, and plans were made long ago to destroy Iraq's advanced technology that could threaten the very existence of Israel. Israel's raid on Iraq's nuclear reactor in 1981 proves this point. Therefore, Iraq's occupation of Kuwait is not the real motivation behind this Western attack on Iraq, it is just a pretext to eliminate the ancient Arab Muslim country!

Iraq refuses to remain within the narrow limits of the Third World category that the superpowers have allocated for us. Leaping beyond these limits towards achieving advancement will result in transmitting this unique case of awakening to the rest of the Arab World. As a result of this awful attack on Iraq protests are heard all over the world because it targeted Iraqi innocent civilians. These noble voices have proved quite effective in the sense that they reflect the adverse feelings of public towards President Bush's tyranny. Such rage extends from Japan and Australia in the east, to North and South America in the west.

The USA and its alliance cannot go on ignoring these cries for ever. The cries against war can develop into sources of terror. Poison gas masks are already carried everywhere by President Bush's bodyguards who fear unexpected chemical attacks on them! Isn't it ironic? Mr. Bush laid the plan for a short tidy war according to him — and here he is getting himself into a bigger mess though he is thousands of miles away from the battlefield.

One cannot but appreciate the loud protests that are heard throughout Germany; for the Germans themselves experienced great catastrophes during World War I and II; they want to prevent the same thing happening to others. It is worthwhile mentioning the call made by women of Dortmund who sent an appeal to Iraqi families through the embassy of Iraq in which they invite Iraqi children to stay temporarily with German families until the danger is over. They seem to have given up, as every one has, on the credibility of the U.N. and its Security Council. As we see, America is not fully satisfied with the food and medicine embargo imposed on the children of Iraq; now Bush augments his appalling action by sending his blessings through waves of continuous bombing!

Now it would seem that it is wise not to adhere to the Security Council's biased resolutions any longer. To justify our point let us go through the Geneva Conventions to ponder on the eighth article regarding the protection of children during catastrophes. Ironically, the U.S., with the help of its U.N. friends has worked hard to create catastrophes for Iraqi children, not to mention Lebanese children who grew up in a state of war that lasted for fifteen years and was often worsened by Israeli bombings after its forces occupied South Lebanon.

Let us come back to the issue of demonstrations and try to analyse these protests that take place in the N. African Arab countries, where millions of marchers hail Iraq's bravery and steadfastness. Such voices are well appreciated by Iraqis but they will be more valuable if they can really serve Iraq's perseverance if pressure was exerted on their governments. For instance gas and oil that is pumped from Algeria and Libya to France and Italy must be stopped immediately. On the other hand stronger appeals must come out of the Moroccan demonstrators to pull their troops out of Saudi Arabia. Also the Arab masses must take, seriously, further steps towards attaining self-sufficiency such as cutting down on food, fuel and energy consumption. Such goals can be achieved through self-control and if it seems arduous to us then we ought to remember Mahatma Gandhi of India.

Therefore, if such marches are to be more beneficial than they must be ramified into different channels; taking a good lesson from the Palestinian uprising whose struggle erupted out of the continuous street protests against the Israeli occupiers.

Nadia Hashem Alout,
Amman.

A think-tank on call

By Patrick Worsnip
Reuters

LONDON — Jan. 17, Iraq allied bombers pounded Iraqi command and control systems as the Gulf war began.

4,000 kilometres away, at an unimpressive red brick building in central London, the switchboard was soon jammed.

A small sign on the front door reads: The International Institute for Strategic Studies. Inside, everyone who could be reached was talking on the phone.

In Saudi Arabia, commanders of the U.S.-led coalition against Iraq reeled off a string of claimed successes. But it was to the experts of the IISS, in the heart of London's Covent Garden theatreland, that much of the world's media came to find out what it all meant.

"The Gulf was flooded us out with enquiries and demands for interviews to all branches of the media," says Colonel Andrew Duncan, assistant director for information.

"I myself must have done close to 200 broadcasts to about 20 countries since Aug. 2 (when Iraq invaded Kuwait)." He said, adding that about eight of the resident analysts had taken the brunt of the requests.

This IISS is not alone in Britain in the field of punditry, one industry to show rapid growth as a result of the war.

Experts from other think-tanks, academics from universities up and down the land, retired military officers and journalists from specialist magazines like Jane's Defence Weekly have

been recruited by the dozen by television channels and newspapers.

Armed with maps, charts and models, they have sought to explain to a deflated public what they think is going on in the Gulf deserts, and what could happen next.

But the IISS has a towering reputation as probably the leading institute in its field in Britain, and perhaps in the world. Staff attribute this to its international character, rigorous standards and financial independence.

Its annual handbook, "The Military Balance," a 250-page font of information about the world's armed forces, is a bible to strategists from Buenos Aires to Beijing.

Founded in 1958 by a group of British academics, politicians, military officers, journalists and churchmen to study the growing complexity of security in a nuclear age, the institute went fully international six years later.

Today, its governing council has members from 16 countries and its 3,000-strong membership list covers 97 countries and reads like a who's of the world's top officials, diplomats, military men and academics dealing with strategic affairs.

Since 1987, the institute has cultivated a dynamic image under the directorship of Francois Heisbourg, son of a senior Luxembourg diplomat.

Still only 41, Heisbourg has had a meteoric career as policy planner and adviser at the French foreign and defence ministries and then vice-president of the French state-owned elec-

tronics Giant Thomson Sa.

The prestige of the IISS contrasts with its modest premises.

Staff and researchers work in cramped an dingy offices and one employee called the meeting room "one of the most inconvenient in London." The 120 people who can squeeze in "when we hire the small chairs" can barely hear or see the speaker.

The budget too is small, about three million dollars a year. Some 60 per cent of the institute's income comes from membership fees, sales of publications and investments, the rest from foundations to fund about 20 research projects.

It is the proud boast of the institute that, to preserve its independence, it takes virtually no money from governments, not does it do consultancy work for industry.

The Gulf war will mean no direct windfalls for the IISS as its experts are allowed to keep their broadcasting fees. But it hopes to gain from increased sales of its books and a rise in membership.

Objective and factual as the IISS may try to be, can it really be neutral, given that most of its staff and council are from Western countries?

"I suppose you could say we can't help but look at things through Western eyes," Duncan, a 61-year-old former British army intelligence officer, admitted in an interview.

"We see our role only as explaining, not professing," Duncan said. "When we don't know we say we don't. That's one advantage we have over the media."

Primakov

(Continued from page 1)

four-man crew from the CBS network, led by Bob Simon.

"He was instructed to inquire of the Iraqi leaders about their fate and, if possible, help them out of that situation," the spokesman said.

Mr. Ignatenko also repeated Moscow's assertions that Mr. Primakov was sent to Iraq to demand an immediate withdrawal from Kuwait, adding there was no back-door approach by the Kremlin to its former Middle East ally.

"We have not brought to Baghdad any secret protocols, any secret agreements," he said. Noting that Primakov had not yet met the Iraqi president, he warned: "Our influence on Baghdad is very small."

Many analysts believe Moscow is looking beyond the Gulf war and preparing for the task of rebuilding relations with Iraq once the fighting is over.

Alexander Dzasokhov, a member of Communist Party politburo and chairman of the parliamentary foreign relations committee, Monday hinted any sudden broadening of military operations against Iraq could endanger U.S.-Soviet ties.

But Soviet conservatives and military hardliners have attacked this stance, saying Moscow is slavishly following Washington's Gulf policies and should never have supported the attack on what was a key ally.

Several Soviet newspapers Tuesday restated Mr. Gorbachev's worries that the allies could go beyond the U.N. mandate.

For Palestinians, Iraq is only viable challenge to Israel

By Rosalind Mandine
USIA

WASHINGTON — Palestinian support for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is an expression of Arab nationalism and not an endorsement of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, according to two prominent scholars on the Arab World. Palestinian support for Iraq is motivated by Iraq's position as "the only viable" Arab challenge to Israel in the region and a sense of Arab and Muslim solidarity, Mohammad Hallaj, director of the Palestine Research and Education Centre in Fairfax, Virginia, and Hisham Sharabi, professor of Arab culture at Georgetown University, said February 11.

They spoke at a conference exploring the effects of the conflict in the Gulf on the Palestinians, sponsored by the Centre for Policy Analysis on Palestine. Also participating were William Quandt, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, Ziad Abu Amr, professor of political science at Bir Zeit University in the West Bank, Bishara Bahbah, director and senior fellow at the Centre for Policy Analysis on Palestine, and Shukri Abed, a research fellow in Islamic studies at the Truman Institute of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

The Centre for Policy Analysis on Palestine is an educational programme of the Jerusalem Fund, a Washington-based non-profit organisation. The centre is dedicated to the study and analysis of the relationship between

the United States and the Middle East, with particular emphasis on the Palestinian problem and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"It is a distortion to interpret Palestinian sympathy with Iraq as an endorsement of the occupation of Kuwait," Mohammad Hallaj said. He noted that the Palestine Liberation Organisation called for the withdrawal of Iraqi forces within an Arab-mediated peace framework at the start of the crisis.

Palestinians see the conflict in a West versus Arab context, and the allied bombing of Iraq underscores this perception, Hallaj said. Palestinians, as well as some other Arab and Muslim groups, view the bombing as an attempt to destroy Iraq as a state, he said, adding that this view has given the "preservation of Iraq greater urgency than the liberation of Kuwait." The choice then became "Arab nationalism against Western hegemony" rather than the liberation of Kuwait, he said.

Iraq's position as "the only viable" Arab challenger to Israel's military superiority in the region is a major motivating force for Palestinian support, Hallaj said. "It is not so much Iraq's military power that Palestinians cheer, but the political implications of that military power," he noted.

Because the bombing of Iraq may eliminate this challenge to Israel, Palestinians see it "as a determination to sanctify the status quo in the region, which is humiliating and detrimental to their interests," Hallaj said.

Sharabi echoed this assessment, saying that "America's attack on Iraq turned a hated dictator into a symbol of Arab nationalism."

Sharabi said reaction in the Arab and Muslim world against the West and in favour of Iraq has been "limited and measured" because Iraq is still intact and there is a hope that the conflict will end "without defeat and humiliation."

However, "if Iraq is destroyed with tens of thousands of casualties, and Saddam Hussein is martyred, the result will likely be the destabilisation of the countries in the region for some time to come," Sharabi said. The conflict has already fueled the rise of Islamic fundamentalist parties in the region, he noted.

William Quandt agreed that "the way the United States conducts the next phase of the war has implications for the region."

If the battle shifts to Kuwait, Iraqi forces are dislodged, and the United States stops there — that will temper perceptions that the United States is interested only in destroying an Arab country," Quandt said. However, he cautioned that what happens next is not totally within the control of the allied coalition.

"If President Bush is prepared to stop there, Saddam Hussein may not want to play that way. The longer the war goes on, the greater personal prestige (for Saddam Hussein) and polarisation in the region. It will be a tough war to end. It's not just dependent on America's restraint

but also on the Iraqi leadership," Quandt said.

In practical terms, the conflict in the Gulf has had devastating economic consequences for the Palestinians and complicated political issues such as the leadership role of the PLO and the peace process, the participants said.

Ziad Abu Amr said that the outcome of the conflict will directly affect the Palestinian leadership and the role of the PLO.

"If Iraq loses, the PLO will be held accountable for siding with Iraq," he noted. This will be translated in the loss of financial backing and geographic sanctuary, he said. There may even be an effort in the Arab League, sponsored by the Arab countries in the allied coalition, to withdraw recognition of the PLO as the official representative of the Palestinian people, Abu Amr suggested.

Support from the Israeli left for the Palestinians has been challenged by the conflict, Shukri Abed pointed out. Many of these Israeli left "betrayed" by Palestinian support for Iraq, he said. Although these Israelis still support the idea of a two state solution, they have "disassociated themselves from the PLO," Abed said.

Abed also suggested that the Gulf conflict has provided the Shamir government with a justification to arrest moderate Palestinians, such as Sari Nusseibeh, in an effort to discredit

local Palestinian leadership. Nusseibeh has been charged with being a spy for Iraq. Iraq Scud missile attacks on Israel have also intensified Israeli calls for the expulsion of Palestinians, Abed said.

Bishara Bahbah said that the economic impact of the conflict on the Palestinians "is indisputably devastating." The conflict has "virtually destroyed the economic basis of the Palestinians" in the occupied territories and Kuwait and "plunged the PLO into serious financial difficulties," he said.

The conflict has resulted in the loss of \$150 million in wages for the Palestinians who fled Kuwait and those who remained, Bahbah noted.

Palestinians living in the occupied territories have experienced a 60 per cent drop in income due to the loss of remittances, the 20 per cent drop in the Jordanian dinar, a decrease in tourism revenue, greater Israeli control over Palestinian exports and an expanded curfew in the occupied territories, he said. The occupied territories and the PLO have also suffered a loss in financial assistance from Kuwait and the lessening of aid from other Gulf states, he added.

The total economic loss for the Palestinians caused by the conflict is \$420 million a year, Bahbah said. This economic crisis will affect the future of the intifada and the PLO leadership, Bahbah said.

Mix of recession and war creates management minefield for businesses

By Rick Gladstone
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Outboard Marine Corp., maker of recreational boats, was a typical American company dealing with a typical American slump in demand — until operation Desert Storm hit.

Some companies, in oil and defense, got an immediate shot of adrenaline from the Gulf mobilization, but the equipment Outboard Marine makes is destined for the lake, not the Gulf.

Like most businesses around the country, the boat builders at Outboard Marine are still struggling to figure out what the Gulf war means to them.

For many, it poses more obstacles than opportunities. Retailers are rethinking buying plans, big manufacturers are trimming staff and rejiggering production schedules, airlines are shrinking, and companies with far-flung offices and customers are dealing with people over the phone instead of traveling.

At Outboard Marine, managers can't estimate when business will improve, said Ronald Krynke, a spokesman for the Waukegan, Illinois, manufacturer. That is, he said, unless "you can tell me the exact duration of this war and what we as a nation are going to spend on it."

The boat company's reluctance to gamble on what lies ahead illustrates the business planning conundrum posed by a declining

economy and an escalating war.

The jarring coincidence of the first recession in eight years and the biggest military assault in a generation has handicapped strategic planners in corporate offices around the United States.

The uncertainty has convinced some to simply toss plans out the window — and then board the window up to ride out the storm. Business complications range from unpredictable costs to possible supply shortages. Firms also must weigh consumer fears about spending money or traveling far from home.

Companies hit particularly hard include those that rely on discretionary spending for survival, such as department stores, airlines, toymakers and other recreational equipment manufacturers, many of them already saddled with huge debts from the borrowing binge of the 1980s.

Even some of the country's mightiest companies have been forced to revise carefully drawn plans. For example, General Motors Corp., the nation's largest industrial company, took the highly unusual step of slashing its quarterly dividend to stockholders, cutting capital spending plans and reducing the staff because of the impact of the war.

In some ways, management experts say, the war has hurt big companies even more than smaller ones, simply because of the enormous difficulties in putting brakes on any huge bureaucracy

when unforeseen events arise.

"It is very, very hard for a large company to change direction because of the systems and the culture," said Karen C. Weeder of Change Management Associates Inc., a consulting firm in Winnetka, Illinois.

Robert S. Wilkerson, head of the Corporate Response Group Inc., a consulting firm in Washington, said "there's a tendency in large corporations to say, 'we're so big it doesn't matter.'"

Even for small and mid-range

less ominous ways.

Newspapers and broadcasters are facing higher costs for covering the war at a time when they can ill afford the added expenses due to a prolonged slump in advertising income.

An important furniture industry exhibition in Germany recently was canceled because attendance was expected to be down due to fears of war-related terrorism. Some fashion designers and suppliers that ordinarily send emissaries to European shows at this time of year have scrapped their

vere strain from the aftermath of the easy-money 1980s. Martin D. Weiss, publisher of the Bank Safety Directory of West Palm Beach, Florida, said he expects up to 35 U.S. banks will fail soon "due to the added financial burden of the war and its aftermath."

If there's a management lesson to be learned from the events in the Gulf since Iraq invaded Kuwait six months ago, it's that nothing should be taken for granted anymore.

"We are moving into a world, of which the war is the first chapter, that's got very different alliances and very different problems, and inherently much more uncertainty than we had in the 1980s," said Gail Foster, chief economist for the Conference Board, a New York-based research group that tracks broad trends in business and the economy.

Illustrating the range of possibilities and inability to predict which is most likely, the group recently spun four forecasts, depending partly on whether the war and recession are short or protracted.

In the best-case scenario, a quick war and prosperity, the economy will grow five-tenths of a per cent this year, inflation will rise 5.2 per cent and unemployment will total 6.5 per cent. In the worst case, a long war and recession, growth will fall 1.2 per cent, inflation will grow 8.1 per cent and unemployment will reach 7.8 per cent.

The war will increase the pressure on banks, already under severe strain from the aftermath of the easy-money 1980 s.

manufacturers like Outboard Marine, which makes boats ranging from canoes to 12 metre cruisers, running a business during the war is the corporate equivalent of carrying a gas mask and skirting a minefield.

Krynke said the company planners believe it is in a strategic position to remain a dominant force in boating, but "we're playing our manufacturing strategy very cautiously at this point."

The war has affected other businesses in subtle but nonethe-

trips. "I think, like a lot of other business people, that you get concerned about terrorists and traveling," said Howard Bloom, president of Chetta B. Inc., a women's apparel company in New York.

Bloom delayed plans to visit Europe, where he's hoping to expand his business. "I'll go when some of the smoke clears a little bit," he said.

The war will increase the pressure on banks, already under se-

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Jordan Times

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

Hearns knocks out Morton

INGLEWOOD, California (AP) — Thomas Hearns knocked out Kemper Morton at two minutes of the second round in a tuneup for his World Boxing Association (WBA) light heavyweight championship bout against Virgil Hill in three months.

Hearns, who weighed 173 pounds (77.8 kilograms), used a left uppercut to floor his lightly regarded opponent, who came into the fight having lost two of his last four outings. Referee Pat Russell counted Morton out to end the bout at 2:02.

The bout was scheduled for 10 rounds.

Hill was at ringside and Hearns said afterwards, "I wanted to give Virgil Hill something to see."

Hearns will challenge the unbeaten Hill on May 17 at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada.

"I knew if I could get my left

hand to work, I could put him on his seat," Hearns said.

Hearns, 32, raised his record to 48-3-1 with 39 knockouts. He is the World Boxing Organisation (WBO) super middleweight champion and was the first boxer ever to win championships in five different weight classes.

Hearns jolted Morton with a left hand at 55 seconds of the first round, the first real punch he threw. At two minutes of the opening round, Hearns hurt Morton with a left-right combination.

Morton came out more aggressive in the second round, but none seemed to hurt Hearns.

Hearns landed a left at 1:20 of the second round which hurt Morton and connected several more times before finishing him off with the left uppercut.

Hearns was fighting for the first

time since last April 28 when he scored a 12-round decision over Michael Olajide in Atlantic City, New Jersey, to retain his WBO super middleweight crown.

Morton, 30, is ranked as the 12th-leading light heavyweight challenger by the United States Boxing Association. He fell to 17-7-2 with 12 knockouts.

Hearns spent 10 days in late October and early November visiting U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia.

He donated his \$50,000 purse to the United Services Organisation, marking what he previously called the beginning of the Thomas Hearns USO Fund established to benefit U.S. post worldwide.

Hearns also received \$212,000 in expenses, according to a California Athletic Commission spokesman. Morton earned

\$10,000.

Terry Norris did it to Sugar Ray Leonard. Now, Virgil Hill believes he can do it to Thomas Hearns.

"I think it's time for Hearns to retire and I'd like to be the one to retire him," Hill said Monday night after watching Hearns beat Morton.

"It's hard to assess a fight when it only goes two rounds," Hill said. "He (Hearns) seemed a little sluggish. It's hard to say what kind of shape he's in. He showed he still hits hard. Kemper can take a good shot."

"He was not in the best of condition I'm sure he will be on May 17. He's not as strong as he used to be, but he still possesses punching power."

"I'm a little rusty, I have to admit," Hearns said.

Holyfield, Foreman to fight in Atlantic City

NEW YORK (AP) — It seems Donald Trump will be able to keep his Evander Holyfield-George Foreman heavyweight title fight in Atlantic City, New Jersey, after all.

A tentative arrangement was revealed Monday night by Dan Duva, who would co-promote the bout with Bob Arum on April 19. The site promoter would be Trump.

A news conference was scheduled for noon Tuesday at Trump's Plaza Hotel to make it official.

"We have reached a tentative agreement," Duva told the Associated Press by telephone Monday night.

Trump had bought the fight for \$11 million, and his Trump Plaza Hotel Casino would be the live site promoter.

Trump, however, last week said there was a "war clause" in the agreement and that the Gulf conflict activated the clause. He said the war was affecting the hotel casino business in Atlantic City and sought to reduce the live site payment from \$11 million to the \$5 million range.

Both Duva and Arum said the war clause was not in effect and threatened to move the fight to Caesars Palace in Las Vegas.

"We're encouraged that the event will happen as scheduled in Atlantic City," Duva said.

But when asked if the fight fee would remain \$11 million, he added: "I can't say anything on that at this time."

The fight between Holyfield and Foreman is expected to be the highest grossing in history. Holyfield is the undisputed heavyweight champion.

Rosset eliminates Svensson in Brussels

BRUSSELS (AP) — Unseeded Marc Rosset of Switzerland beat fifth-seeded Swede Jonas Svensson 6-0, 6-4, on the opening day of the \$100,000 Donny Indoor Tennis Championships.

Svensson, who ended 1990 ranked 11th in the world, became the first seeded player to be eliminated in the week-long Belgian event.

In other action, Andrei Cherkasov of the Soviet Union beat

Spain's unseeded Juan Aguilera, 6-2, 6-2, and sixth-seeded Andrei Chesnokov, also of the Soviet Union, scored a 3-6, 6-4, 6-4 victory over Christian Bergstrom of Sweden.

Bergstrom replaced Todd Witsken of the United States in the tournament draw. Witsken pulled out of the tourney because of an illness.

Australia's Pat Cash, a wildcard entry who has slipped badly

in world rankings, struggled to a 2-6, 7-6 (7-5), 6-3 win over Karel Novacek of Czechoslovakia in a match lasting two hours and 12 minutes.

The Belgian Indoor event ends next Sunday and has attracted the world's top two players, no. 1 Boris Becker and second-ranked Stefan Edberg.

Andre Agassi of the United States, the world's no. 4-ranked player, also is scheduled to compete.

Tauziat beats Smylie in slims of Chicago

CHICAGO (AP) — Eighth-seeded Nathalie Tauziat of France rallied from a 3-1 third-set deficit Monday to defeat Elizabeth Smylie 6-2, 6-7 (5-7), 7-5 in the first round of the \$350,000 Virginia Slims of Chicago.

There were five service breaks in the final set before the world's 16th-ranked player ended the two-hour match, forcing her Australian opponent to hit her serve over the end line.

Tauziat had Smylie at match point four times before her victory.

In earlier matches, Tami Whitlinger outlasted Robin White, 7-6 (7-3), 6-0, and Ann Grossman was too tough for Gigi Fernandez, 2-7, 7-5, 6-3.

Tauziat, after breaking Smylie twice in the opening set, trailed 5-1 in the second set before rallying to win five straight games.

But, Smylie, rated 51st in the world, won the 12th game, forcing the 12-point tie breaker.

Smylie squared the match at a set apiece, smashing a return at the feet of Tauziat and getting her opponent to hit a return over the end line.

Tauziat had double faulted in the 10th game of the final set, squaring the set at five games apiece.

After forcing the 11th game to go to deuce, Smylie lost her serve, hitting two straight returns into the net.

Tauziat went up 10-0 in the 12th game, only to have Smylie

win the next three points. Smylie forced the match to go to deuce twice before bowing out.

"It was a very strange match," said Tauziat. "It was like a boxing match with both players coming back."

"She played good some times, other times, she could not get to the ball," Tauziat said of her opponent.

The Grossman-Fernandez match was marred by a racket-throwing incident on the part of Fernandez in the seventh game of the final set.

With Grossman ahead 4-2, Fernandez suddenly smashed her

racket twice when her return off a drop shot was voided because the ball had bounced twice.

What bothered Grossman, ranked 50th, was that chair umpire Lambert Chapin did not penalize Fernandez.

"I was warned for violating the one-minute time rule between games," she noted.

"There's no way he should have let her get away with it, using profanity, and not getting a warning, I told the umpire," Grossman said.

"So I told him, but what could he say? added Grossman. "He was guilty."

North, South Korea agree on joint sports team

PANMUNJOM, Korea (R) — North and South Korea, still technically at war, agreed Tuesday to form joint teams for the first time to represent the divided peninsula at international sports events.

Forging an agreement first sought in 1984, the two Koreas agreed to send teams under one flag to a table tennis tournament in Japan in April and a soccer festival in Portugal in June.

If the agreement is implemented, it would be the first time any inter-Korean joint entity appeared under a Korean flag since the peninsula was divided in 1945 at the end of World War II.

Hostilities have never been formally ended since the two sides fought the bitter 1950-53 Korean War.

Talks aimed at forming a joint team for the 1988 Olympics in Seoul and the 1990 Asian Games

in Peking failed. North Korea boycotted the Seoul Olympiad and both countries sent their own teams to the Asian.

"We've exchanged the same feeling, that we must form a united team to the two games," an official at Seoul's North-South Dialogue Office said.

The current round of talks began last autumn after historic soccer matches in Seoul and Pyongyang between Northern and Southern teams.

While both sides agreed in principle to field joint teams, talks became deadlocked over details.

Delegates meeting Tuesday at the truce village straddling the heavily fortified border made mutual concessions on training venues. Agreement was announced at about 11:40 a.m. (0340 GMT).

The delegations then resumed

working level meetings to set the final details and were expected to announce five separate accords Tuesday at Panmunjom.

"It's a glimmer of hope," a Western diplomat said. "After all if they can't agree on a few items in the sports arena, there's little hope for anything else."

But the diplomat cautioned that sports agreements had foundered in the past. "One can't be sure these things will happen until they happen."

The team's flag, name and anthem had been agreed in a previous round of sports talks in 1989 when the Koreans sought unsuccessfully to form a joint national team for the 1990 Asian Games.

Contacts between them have accelerated since their prime ministers met for the first time in Seoul in September last year. A

fourth such round of talks is scheduled in Pyongyang from Feb. 25 to 28.

The talks, the highest level inter-Korean dialogue, have yielded little but agreement to keep talking.

Under Tuesday's agreement, the two sides will send joint teams to the 41st World Table Tennis Championships in April and the World Youth Soccer Festival in June under the team name "Korea" in English.

South Korean delegates agreed to a Northern proposal that the table tennis team train jointly in Japan, and the North Koreans agreed to a Southern demand that the soccer teams train jointly in both countries.

As previously agreed, the team flag will depict the outline of the Korean peninsula. The team anthem will be "Ariang," a popular Korean folk song.

Salinas silences another critic

MADRID (AP) — FC Barcelona forward Julio Salinas has baffled soccer purists with his gawky but apparently effective style through seven seasons in Spain's first division.

He has come under repeated public criticism from coaches and other soccer pundits, who insist the 1.88-metre forward is not up to first-division standards.

Yet he has continued to score goals, despite not always being in the starting lineup.

Barcelona's Dutch coach Johan Cruyff was the latest to seemingly criticise Salinas prematurely.

Following Barcelona's Feb. 10 draw with Valencia, Cruyff blamed Salinas for his league-leading club not winning, accusing the forward of "not even touching the ball."

That set off rumours that the Spanish international star would be sold at the end of the season.

But on Sunday, Salinas scored one goal, set up two others and had another score nullified in Barcelona's 4-2 victory over Betis.

When reporters cornered Cruyff following the game, the coach tersely said: "If Salinas

always played like he did today, I'd be extremely pleased."

Salinas, 28, began playing in the Athletic Bilbao organisation when he was 11. In 1983-84 he scored 22 goals in the second division and won his ticket to the first-division team, where he was joined later by his younger brother, Patri.

Since then, despite frequent criticism, he has steadily improved his standing among the thin ranks of native Spanish goal scorers in the first division.

He looks too awkward to succeed in the swift Spanish League. But his long legs serve to protect the ball against tacklers, and he has scored an average of 17 goals a season. This season he has five, but has started few matches.

He was traded to Atletico Madrid in 1986, where he continued to score but complained bitterly because he felt coach Cesar Luis Menotti of Argentina didn't give him enough playing time.

That same year, Salinas began playing for the national team, scoring a goal in his debut match.

Platini keeps faith with squad

PARIS (R) — France's soccer coach Michel Platini named an almost unchanged squad Monday for the crucial European Championship Group 1 qualifier against Spain in Paris on Feb. 20.

The only real surprise came in midfield, where Philippe Verriy and Jean-Marc Ferreri were both dropped after poor performances in the league.

Verriy did not play for Marseille in last weekend's victory at Paris St. Germain and Ferreri had failed to shine recently with struggling Bordeaux.

But Platini did keep faith with veteran midfielder Luis Fernandez, a former colleague in the magical French team that won the European Championship in 1984, despite a lingering dispute between them.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSCH
1991 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠K8762 ♠AQ8 ♠AK63 ♠6
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 3 ♠ Pass
3 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?

A.—We think it's safe to presume that there are no losers in the majors; thus, slam depends entirely on partner's controls. We would use Blackwood to check on aces and kings, intending to bid a spade grand slam should partner, as we expect, turn up with two aces and a king.

Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠A73 ♠K7 ♠K876 ♠9765
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ 1 ♠ 2 ♠ 2 ♠
3 ♠ Pass 3 NT Pass
4 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?

A.—What started out as a sound raise is now questionable—the subsequent bidding indicates that your ace of spades might be a wasted value, facing a void in partner's hand. Therefore, we recommend a slightly conservative raise to five clubs.

Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠10 ♠J6 ♠J542 ♠A106432
Partner opens the bidding with one spade. What action do you take?
A.—Bid one no trump. Unlike a no-trump opening bid, a one-no-trump response does not promise a balanced hand. You are nowhere near strong enough for an immediate two-club response, which would be forcing for a round.

Q.4—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠J7 ♠104 ♠J543 ♠A10952
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass
3 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?

A.—The one action we don't recommend is a bid of three no trump—your diamond stopper is virtually non-existent. We suggest a preference to three spades, to see what partner does next.

Q.5—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠J7 ♠104 ♠J543 ♠A10952
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass
3 ♠ Pass ?
What action do you take?

A.—Partner is simply showing 10 or 11 cards in the majors, with spades at least as long, or longer, than hearts. You have no reason to presume that you can make more than game. So your duty, with equal length in partner's suits, is to correct to his first-bid suit.

Q.6—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠KQ1093 ♠76 ♠AQ54 ♠KJ3
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?

A.—Partner's two-club response has improved your hand enormously, and a raise to three clubs doesn't do it full justice. Plan to bid out your shape by first rebidding two diamonds, then jump raising clubs at your next turn.

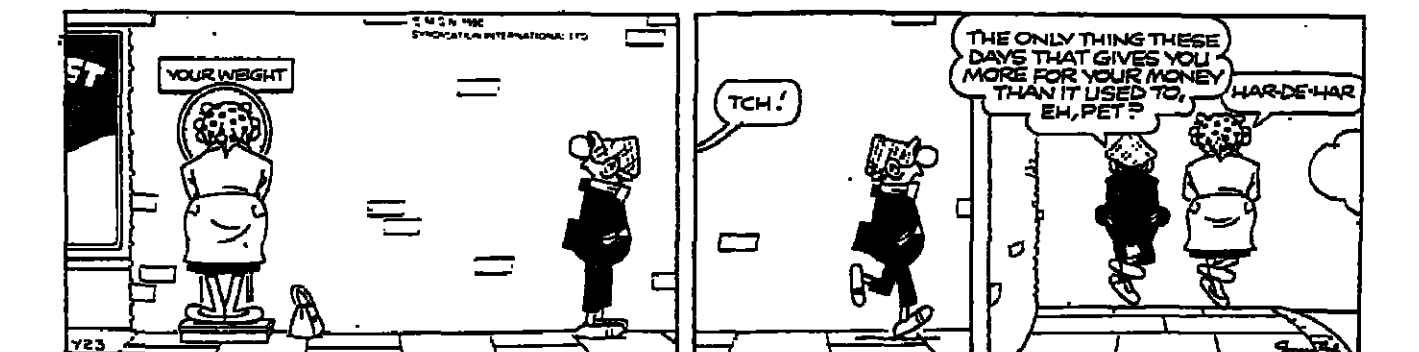
Mutt'n'Jeff



Andy Capp



Peanuts



Horoscope not received

THE BETTER HALF

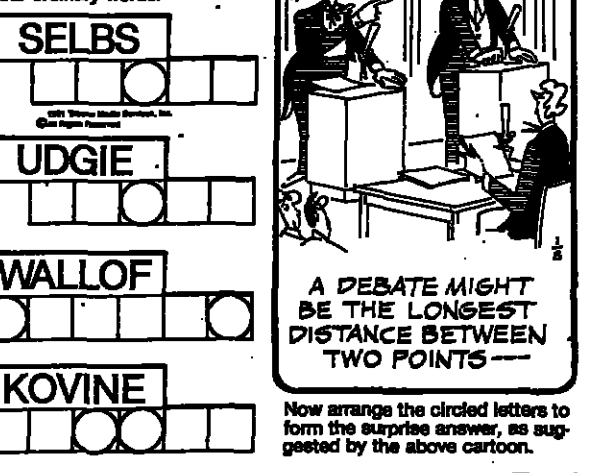
By Harris



"If marriage is a two-way street, then you must be the dip in the road!"

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Print answer here: _____

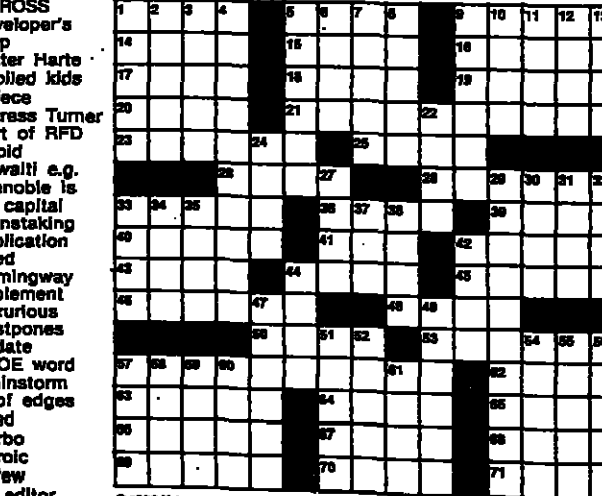
(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble: CHALK PATCH EXODUS TEACUP

Answer: The only thing that's ever raised on some city land—THE TAXES

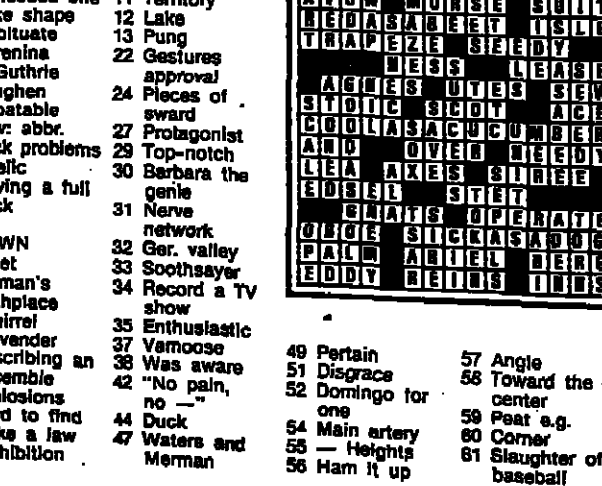
THE Daily Crossword

by Martha J. De Witt



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



Gulf war hits Asia's tourist trade

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong hotels are lowering prices, China's tourist restaurants are jacking them up and Thai vendors are selling Saddam Hussein T-shirts.

The month-old Gulf war is having an impact on Asia's tourism industry with cancellations and a worldwide decrease in travel hitting regional airlines and hotels.

Many countries are hoping intra-Asia tourists will take up the slack. They are introducing a wide range of measures to attract more business.

"We're finding that long-haul markets are being more affected than regional markets," said Penny Byrne, spokeswoman for the Hongkong Tourist Association. "Some people who were planning to go to the United States (or Europe) are deciding to travel within Asia instead," he noted. Fear of guerrilla attacks has

prompted many business and leisure travellers from the United States, Europe and Japan to cancel or postpone trips.

Arrivals from Europe to Australia on Qantas Airlines have plummeted 50 per cent since the war began on Jan. 17, and airline spokesmen said. Those from Japan have dropped 40 per cent.

"Many U.S. companies are asking their employees not to travel unless it's essential," said Karina Leung, spokeswoman for Hongkong's Cathay Pacific Airways.

Bookings for Cathay's long-haul flights have fallen to about 60 to 65 per cent from the normal rate of 70 to 75 per cent since the war began, she said.

The war has put a damper on Asia's traditionally thriving nightlife.

In Seoul, a six-to-six curfew on U.S. servicemen, lifted only last week, saw a drop in customers in

the red-light district of Itaewon. Business for Thailand's go-go bars and sex shows has suffered after the government ordered neon lights to be switched off at 9 p.m. and the number of Arab guests fell by 43 per cent.

While intercontinental travel has lagged, regional business has remained strong, with healthy bookings by Hong Kong and Taiwan travellers for the Chinese lunar new year holiday on Feb. 15.

Some places, such as Singapore and Hong Kong, are actively courting Asian tourists.

"We hope the Japanese who had wanted to go to Europe or the Middle East will choose Singapore instead," said Pek Hock Thiam, executive director of Singapore's Tourist Promotion Board.

Australia, where overseas cancellations are running at around five per cent, has put together an advertising campaign to show

nervous travellers its distance from the Gulf war.

"We have seen the knee-jerk reaction and all the cancellations they brought," said Tony Thirlwell, managing director at the Australian Tourist Commission. "Now we are hoping to pick up business we may not otherwise have got."

Some Asian entrepreneurs have taken drastic measures.

In Beijing, foreigners must pay 95 yuan (\$18) to see an exhibition in the forbidden city. Locals pay five yuan (96 U.S. cents).

Restaurants in some hotels have added 10 per cent to food prices and raised the service charge from 10 to 15 per cent.

Vendors in Thailand are trying a different tack. With sales lagging for pirated cassette tapes and fake Rolex watches, many have turned to selling T-shirts emblazoned with a portrait of Saddam Hussein.

U.S. air industry faces costly fares war, announces job cuts

CHICAGO (R) — There was yet more blood-letting in the airline industry Monday, with U.S. carriers announcing big job cuts and stepping up a costly price war they can ill afford — but dare not ignore.

The fare war, coming on top of recession and a real war, could not have come at a worse time, as U.S. carriers face their biggest shake-out since deregulation in 1978.

U.S. airlines could not help but plan along as they fight for travelers left wary by war in the Middle East and recession at home.

Trans World Airlines (TWA) said Monday it would cut fares by 50 per cent between Britain and six U.S. cities following British Airways' announcement Sunday that it would make a 33 per cent cut in its popular 30-day advance purchase fares from London to New York.

TWA said tickets must be bought by Feb. 18 and are fully

refundable. The discounts are available for travel until Oct. 31. A full, non-restricted one-way coach fare from New York to London will fall to \$269 from \$338 for midweek winter travel.

Pan Am Corp., the other main U.S. carrier overseas, said it would match British Airways' cut but was expected to be competitive with the TWA fares as well.

Delta Air Lines said it would match the fares in flights from Atlanta and Cincinnati to London's Gatwick Airport. Delta does not fly to Heathrow, British Airways' main hub.

The industry's troubles have increased recently, with U.S. carriers Pan Am and Continental Airlines in bankruptcy and Eastern Airlines out of business as of last month.

The industry lost about \$2 billion in 1990, its worst year ever. As the U.S. economy began to slow, fliers stayed home.

The trouble spread Monday,

Italian group plans hotel complexes in Tunisia

TUNIS (R) — An Italian group led by the San Paolo Bank plans to invest between \$250 and \$300 million to develop tourist sites in Tunisia, officials said Tuesday.

The group comprises the bank, the Valtour tour operator, the Benedetti and Fibrescia companies, and the Investment and Trading company (ITC), and offshore firm based in Tunis.

The participants said in a statement they had formed the Tabarka company with capital of nearly \$8 million.

The group has taken out options on sites in the Tabarka seaside resort area north of Tunis and has plans to build hotel complexes with a total of 10,000 beds.

ITC said the programme was subject to approval by the Tunisian government.

Foreign exchange loss, inflation squeezes World Council of Churches

CANBERRA (R) — Inflation and adverse exchange rates have put the squeeze on the World Council of Churches (WCC), forcing it to freeze staff numbers and to plan budget cuts.

"We come to this assembly in a financial position worse than the last assembly and worse than was anticipated one year ago," Carol Abel, co-moderator of the WCC finance committee, told a news conference Tuesday at the council's seventh assembly.

The WCC represents 316 churches, excluding the Roman Catholic Church. It meets every seven years to formulate religious policy.

"Over the years since 1981 many external things have conspired against the council's finances," said Abel.

Rising inflation in Switzerland, the council's home, has pushed WCC costs up by more than 35 per cent.

A weakening U.S. dollar and Deutschmark have also hurt the council's coffers as most donations are in U.S. dollars and most of its income is generated in marks.

Weak exchange rates have offset increases in donations from member churches, which have risen 70 per cent since 1981.

Abel said the council would look at ways of increasing its

Study shows American banks had a miserable year in 1990

NEW YORK (Agencies) — American banks had a miserable year in 1990, with profits plummeting and problem loans soaring, according to a study released Monday.

Overall, banks saw their non-performing assets, or problem loans, rise 35 per cent to 3.03 per cent of assets in 1990, up from 2.24 per cent the year before, according to SNL Securities, a banking research and publishing firm based in Charlottesville, Virginia.

The group's survey of 1990 banking results showed that when write-offs for Third World loans are excluded, the nation's banks reported average return on assets was 0.54 per cent, a 40 per cent drop from the year before. Many of the nation's largest banks set aside millions in 1989 in one-time charges to cover falling loans to developing countries.

SNL spokeswoman Elisabeth Todaro said the company's research showed earnings were the worst since the 1930s depression, but she didn't provide figures for comparison.

The report provided stark evidence of the credit crunch, with banks' loan growth slowing to 1.89 per cent in 1990, down from 5.88 per cent the year before. The Federal Reserve has lowered interest rates in recent weeks to encourage banks to resume lending and stimulate economic growth.

Banks in New England, the middle Atlantic and the southeast

regions suffered the greatest loss in profitability when the Third World loan losses were excluded, the firm reported.

New England banks reported a loss of 0.81 per cent return on average assets for 1990, down from a 0.22 per cent loss from the year before. Banks in the six-state region saw their ratio of bad loans to assets rise 77 per cent to 6.53 per cent in 1990. The average nationwide was 3.03 per cent, SNL reported.

Midwestern banks were the exception in the gloomy report. They reported the lowest ratio of bad loans to assets, 1.45 per cent, and the highest ratio of reserves to bad loans, 80.82 per cent.

Nationwide, the ratio of reserves to bad loans was 58.46 per cent.

The Midwest was not plagued by the steep increase in real estate prices and associated construction boom, generally regarded as the cause of banks' falling real estate portfolio.

Quarterly profits for midwestern banks were 0.94 per cent of assets in 1990, higher than the same period the year before, the company reported.

The Bush administration last week proposed the most fundamental reform of the ailing U.S. banking industry since the depression, but it could face opposition from Congress which seems wary of radical change.

The proposals aim to revitalize the banking industry and make it competitive internationally by

giving banks broad new powers, including the right to expand nationwide.

But U.S. lawmakers, anxious to avoid a repeat of the multi-billion-dollar taxpayer bailout of the savings and loan industry, are likely to move cautiously on deregulation of bank ownership and new areas of business, industry representatives say.

Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady said the reforms were designed to put the United States back on the map as a leading banking power.

"We are trying to do something that strengthens the American banking system, provides more services to the consumer and makes sure we do something about the situation where the top U.S. bank number 27 is the world," Brady told a news conference.

The Treasury Department plan outlined by Brady would remove barriers between banking and commerce and permit industrial companies as well as securities and insurance firms to own banks.

The reforms would allow banks to compete directly with Wall Street securities firms to get a slice of the lucrative market in underwriting stocks and bonds.

Depression era banking laws barred commercial banks from the stock market, fearing they would suffer from its volatility.

Many in Congress blame rapid deregulation for the savings and loans crisis.

Brady said he recognised these

concerns would come up in Congress, but emphasised that banks are much better capitalised than the thrift industry was in the 1980s when its problems surfaced.

Brady said he believed the chances of steering the reform package through Congress were good.

"I see on both sides a willingness to move," he told reporters. But congressional leaders have been quick to criticise the plan for giving banks new freedoms before stricter measures to supervise them are up and running.

"The administration makes a mistake in proposing new and risky activities for banks before the supervisory and insurance reforms are in place and working," said representative Henry Gonzalez, a Texas Democrat and chairman of the House Banking Committee.

Michigan Democrat Donald Riegle, who is Senate Banking Committee chairman, said that boosting the shrinking bank deposit insurance fund and stronger bank supervision were more urgent priorities than the proposals on product deregulation and ownership of banks.

The industry's current problems stem largely from real estate loans that turned sour with the collapse in land values as the economy slid into recession. For many institutions the real estate troubles followed years of writing off problem loans to Third World countries.

British Airways to cut more than 4,000 jobs

LONDON (R) — British Airways PLC said Monday it would cut 4,300 jobs by the end of March 1991, a 10 per cent reduction from 2,000 other staff on half pay due to rising costs and slumping passenger numbers caused by the Gulf war and the recession.

The company said after talks with union representatives it would cut 4,300 jobs in Britain and 300 overseas, mostly through voluntary redundancy.

British Airways said in a statement it "will be forced to reduce staff numbers following the recent sharp downturn in world air travel and to counter the current exceptional circumstances created by war in the Middle East and deepening worldwide recession."

It said the trade unions supported the proposals to solve the problem and "secure the future prosperity of the airline."

Savings would be made in all areas worldwide "with a higher proportion of job losses amongst management."

The airline said it aims to cut 2,900 jobs by the end of March 1991, leaving 2,100 as soon as possible thereafter.

Staff put on half pay "will be subject to recall following notice from the company when traffic returns to more normal levels," the company added.

"With aircraft flying some routes half empty we cannot afford to carry on as we are," said British Airways deputy chairman and chief executive, Sir Colin Marshall.

The airline sparked a transatlantic airfare war Sunday with a 33 per cent cut in its regular return 30-day advance purchase fares from London to New York.

"We must reduce our cost base to reflect the smaller numbers of passengers we are carrying now and for the foreseeable future. By taking action today we will protect our business and be ready to take advantage of future business and market opportunities," he noted.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES			
Monday, February 11, 1991			
Central Bank official rates			
Buy	Sell		
U.S. dollar	662.0	666.0	
Pound Sterling	1315.9	1322.8	
Deutschmark	454.1	456.8	
Swiss franc	532.4	535.6	
French franc	133.4	134.2	
Japanese yen (for 100)	518.0	521.1	
Dutch guilder	403.1	405.5	
Swedish crown	121.0	121.7	
Italian lira (for 100)	60.4	60.8	
Belgian franc (for 10)	220.9	222.2	

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES			
Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.			
One Sterling	1.9890/900	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.1545/55	Canadian dollar	
	1.4548/55	Deutschmarks	
	1.6390/400	Dutch guilders	
	1.2458/65	Swiss francs	
	29.90/95	Belgian francs	
	4.9550/600	French francs	
	1094/1095	Italian lire	
	128.15/25	Japanese yen	
	5.4675/25	Swedish crowns	
	5.6960/10	Norwegian crowns	
	5.6020/70	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	362.35/362.85	U.S. dollars	

New European central bank action lifts dollar

LONDON (R) — A new wave of central bank intervention in Europe Tuesday underpinned the dollar and by midsession the shaky U.S. currency was holding above the morning's lows against the mark.

The dollar stood at 1.4548 marks by 1300 GMT, up from a record low close in London of 1.4460 marks and well above its record traded low of 1.4435 marks set in New York Monday.

Against the Japanese currency it was quoted around 128.15 yen, up from the 127.90 yen close.

The dollar was aided by a coordinated round of buying by central banks led, unexpectedly, by Germany's Bundesbank.

The Bundesbank said it bought for marks in mid-morning at around 1.4480 marks. The central banks of Britain, Spain, Sweden, France, Austria, Finland and Norway joined the intervention, dealers and monetary officials said.

Dealers said the action aimed

to quash any notion that the U.S. and German central banks disagreed over the dollar's value, after Bundesbank Deputy President Helmut Schlesinger said in an interview with Reuters Monday that intervention at prevailing dollar levels was not needed.

Schlesinger's comment was taken to mean the Bundesbank would allow a further slide in the dollar, which has been weakened because U.S. interest rates are weaker than those in Germany.

"The Bundesbank came in to make a point. They want to kill any rumours of disharmony between the Bundesbank and the Fed," said Geoff Earnshaw, deputy head of strategic trading at National Westminster Bank in London.

Dealers said there was still little news to push the currency higher, while the expectation that U.S. interest rates could decline further pointed to more dollar weakness.

Unisys suspends dividends, to sell \$1b in assets

BLUE BELL, Pennsylvania (AP) — Unisys Corp. said Monday it suspended its preferred stock dividends and was trying to sell \$1 billion in assets, part of a plan by the troubled computer company to further reduce its debt.

Unisys plans to pay off debt with the \$30 million normally paid each quarter to holders of preferred stock, spokesman Peter Hynes said from the company's headquarters.

Unisys' move prompted Moody's Investors Service Inc., a major credit-rating agency, to drop its rating of the preferred stock by one notch.

Common stock dividends were suspended in September, giving the nation's third-largest computer maker \$10 million each quarter to put toward debt reduction.

Unisys has three classes of preferred stock. Series A is publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange, while the \$150 million worth of stock in series B and C are entirely owned by Mitsui and Co. of Japan.

Mitsui, a Japanese trading company, owns one-third of Unisys' Japanese subsidiary. Unisys sold the preferred stock to Mitsui last year to raise cash.

The preferred stock is of the cumulative type, meaning Unisys must make up for any missed

dividends once it resumes paying them.

The series A preferred stock fell \$3 a share to close at \$8 Monday after Unisys' announcement.

Unisys' common stock rose 50 cents a share to close at \$4 in heavy trading. The common stock had risen sharply Friday as well on rumors the company was about to announce asset sales.

The company had \$3.7 billion in debt as of Dec. 31, down from a peak of \$4.1 billion in the middle of 1989. Its debt mushroomed in the 1980s as profits lagged and Unisys borrowed to pay dividends.

"While we made significant progress in reducing debt during 1990, in this weakened and uncertain economic climate, suspension of the dividends is a prudent step to provide additional funds for our debt-reduction effort," Unisys chairman and chief executive James Unruh said in a statement.

Unisys said it reduced its debt by \$600 million in 1990 and wants to reduce it by at least the same amount this year.

Hynes said more than half of the \$600 million would come from the sale of assets. "The effort involves internally generated funds and the sale of non-core assets," Unruh said.

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Soviet premier says forces in West attempted economic coup

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov said in an interview published Tuesday that forces in the West tried to overthrow President Mikhail Gorbachev last month in an attempted economic coup.

Pavlov told the trade union daily *Trud* that he knew of plans to flood the country with billions of roubles to oust the Soviet leader and do away with Communist rule.

"There is nothing unique in it. Such actions have been carried out in many regions of the world in order to change a political system and oust inconvenient politicians," Pavlov said.

"President Gorbachev is getting in someone's way," added Pavlov, who was Soviet finance minister before being appointed premier last month.

"I can assure you that in this matter, not days but hours played a role. We were threatened with a loss of economic independence, a kind of annexation, quiet and bloodless," he said.

"The weakening of our statehood and loss of independence would mean the rapacious exploitation of our natural, human and ecological resources. With all respect to Western civilisation, there should be no illusions about this."

Pavlov said it was known a major injection of money into the Soviet Union had been prepared. This was done by different

means, including the buying of 100 and 50 rouble notes.

"This (campaign) was joined by bank organisations in our country and a number of private banks in Austria, Switzerland and Canada. I will not name the banks, although I know their addresses," he said.

Asked where the Western banks had obtained such huge sums of Soviet roubles, Pavlov said:

"I still don't have the right to tell you about this and many other things, because the financial war which has been declared against us is still going on. And war is war."

Pavlov said the government had only averted financial catastrophe by withdrawing all 50 and 100 rouble notes late last month, a deeply unpopular move throughout the country.

In the interview, Pavlov hinted the plan might be related to the Gulf crisis, but gave no further details.

A spokesman for the cabinet of ministers, the Soviet government, said: "The subject of the interview has not been commented on. That means he is satisfied, I think."

In the interview, which covered almost a page of the newspaper, Pavlov also said that if the government failed to stop the country's present economic decline by March, society would be on the brink of disaster.

"I would only say that with

such losses in six months we will reach the level of destruction similar to the period of the (1918-1921) civil war," he said.

Several million people died during the civil war, which virtually destroyed the country's flourishing pre-war economy.

In a separate development, the United States Monday praised Lithuania's vote in favour of independence as an expression of popular will that should be taken into account in negotiations between the Baltic republic and Soviet authorities.

Noting that over 76 per cent of all eligible voters had supported Lithuanian independence from Moscow, State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said:

"The people of Lithuania thus will have the right to use such a device to express their will. We hope that the results of such a poll will play a role in the upcoming negotiations between Moscow and Vilnius."

Over 90 per cent of the 2.65 million people who voted in Saturday's plebiscite backed the creation of "an independent and democratic republic," even in two heavily non-Lithuanian areas, a narrow majority voted "yes," demonstrating support for independence among the Russian and Polish minorities.

Tutwiler noted that Gorbachev issued a decree declaring the poll illegal but also that Soviet authorities allowed the vote to go for-

ward without interference.

The United States supports independence for the Baltic republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. It never recognised their incorporation into the Soviet Union in 1940 under the terms of a secret deal with Nazi Germany.

Noting that Latvia and Estonia were planning similar plebiscites in the next few weeks, Tutwiler said:

"Our position on this is that referenda carried out in a democratic manner are one of the internationally accepted means for the expression of the popular will."

Meanwhile, the Lithuanian parliament voted Monday to make a declaration of an independent, democratic state the basis of its proposed new constitution.

It also appealed to other nations to help Lithuania to restore its pre-war independence as a full member of the world community, including participation in the United Nations.

The Baltic republic's information office said parliament, with 116 in favour and one abstention, voted to include the text of the weekend plebiscite in the first article of a draft "independence" constitution.

A second article would require the approval of 75 per cent of all voters to amend this key provision in any way.

U.S. opens consulate in Ukraine

KIEV, U.S.S.R. (AP) — After 15 years of diplomatic wrangling, the United States is opening a consulate this month in the Ukrainian capital, drawing cheers from independence activists who are courting Western support.

U.S. officials, wary of stirring trouble for President Mikhail Gorbachev, say the consulate's opening does not mean diplomatic recognition or support for an independent Ukraine, the second most populous of the 15 Soviet republics.

"It's not our policy to confer recognition if the matter hasn't been resolved by the Soviets themselves," said a Western diplomat in Moscow who spoke on condition he not be identified.

U.S. officials note that if the Soviet Union had not invaded Afghanistan in 1979, the building might have opened a decade ago, when few people could conceive of Ukrainian secession.

France and Germany, which already have consulates in Kiev, also have remained neutral in the fray over independence.

Behind the diplomatic tip-toeing, however, is a clear U.S. recognition that the Ukraine is an industrial and agricultural powerhouse of 52 million people whose future is important to the West.

If it breaks away from the Soviet Union, it will be Europe's largest country in territory and fifth-largest in population, after Germany, Italy, Britain and France.

Ukrainian independence activists welcome the opening of Western missions.

"Without question, we need Western contacts," said poet Ivan Drach, chairman of the Rukh Independence Movement. "We particularly need people who are here permanently, who can see and understand what is going on, because truth and knowledge are our only weapons."

The U.S. State Department originally decided to open the consulate in the 1970s in an exchange that involved opening a Soviet consulate in New York. It sent a 15-person advance team to Kiev and invested about \$1 million in renovations to three buildings for offices and housing.

When the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979, however, then-President Jimmy Carter retaliated by cutting off government-sponsored exchanges, boycotting the Moscow Olympics and cancelling plans for the consulate.

After Gorbachev came to power in 1985 and U.S.-Soviet relations warmed, plans for the consulate were renewed. But the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear accident, security concerns heightened by the alleged bugging of the new U.S. embassy in Moscow, and reciprocal limits on U.S. and Soviet diplomatic staff delayed the project.

In the last year, as the Ukrainian independence movement has grown, the United States has been pushing again to open the consulate.

Its legislature declared sovereignty from Moscow in July and called for a new constitution, an independent banking system, and a separate currency. Lawmakers also approved legislation to exempt conscripted Ukrainians from serving in the Soviet Armed Forces outside the Ukraine, and to create its own military formations. That step has not actually been taken.

All of the major political groups in the republic, from the Communist Party to the Greens Movement, have endorsed the sovereignty claim.

Unlike the Baltic republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, however, the Ukraine has not declared full independence.

"Sovereignty" in the Soviet lexicon, means only that the republic's laws take precedence over national ones. By the end of 1990, all the 15 republics had made such claims, creating what Soviet leaders call a "war of laws" that has paralysed government at all levels.

Until the new Ukrainian constitution is complete, which could take at least a year, the republic's leaders have said they will not consider signing the new union treaty proposed by Gorbachev to hold the country together. The republic, however, is taking part in a March 17 nationwide referendum on preserving the union.

Support appears to be growing for Rukh, the powerful independence movement formed two years ago. It claims 700,000 dues-paying members and 5 million supporters.

Two U.S. diplomats, Consul General Jon Granderson and Consul John Stepanchuk, are scheduled to move to Kiev in late February.

Stepanchuk said they will not be able to perform full consular duties.

Mandela, De Klerk hold talks on ANC's armed struggle

COPE TOWN (R) — African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela met South African President F.W. de Klerk Tuesday for secret talks about a faltering pact on the suspension of armed opposition to white rule, government sources said.

One source said Mandela and De Klerk, backed by senior officials and ministers, were trying to resolve a conflict on the sort of anti-apartheid action by Mandela's followers that could be tolerated under the agreement.

An ANC official confirmed the Mandela-De Klerk meeting in Cape Town was the first between the two this year, but refused to say more.

"This is not a public matter. I have no right to be talking to you," he said.

The ANC and the government differ on the proper interpretation of an agreement signed in Pretoria last August in which the ANC undertook to suspend its guerrilla war against apartheid and to halt "related activities."

"They believe mass action should be allowed and that they should be able to recruit and train people for their army. We disagree," a government source told Reuters.

Government and opposition sources said a committee appointed by the two sides to resolve the matter failed to agree on a definition of "related activities."

They said the issue was refer-

red to Mandela and De Klerk earlier this month for direct negotiation.

Officials declined to confirm that Mandela was at De Klerk's Tuynhuys office alongside parliament, saying that all meetings relating to the so-called Pretoria minute were secret.

ANC official Reg September said nothing should be published about the talks until Mandela and De Klerk were ready to make a statement.

He declined to discuss the areas of difference between the ANC and the government on interpretation of the agreement to suspend the anti-apartheid battle waged by the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto We Sizwe (Spear of the Nation).

De Klerk opened the way for talks with the ANC a year ago when he lifted a 30-year-old ban on the movement and freed Mandela from a 27-year jail sentence for fighting white rule.

The two sides have agreed terms for the release of up to 3,500 political prisoners and for the safe return of up to 40,000 ANC exiles.

The ANC undertook to suspend its armed struggle but insists it retains the right to stage mass protests against apartheid.

De Klerk has promised to begin negotiations with the ANC and other black groups as soon as possible on a transition from white rule to a non-racial democracy.

Witness agrees to appear at Winnie Mandela's trial

JOHANNESBURG (R) — The trial of Winnie Mandela on charges of kidnapping and assault will go ahead after a key witness decided to testify in open court, state prosecutor Jan Swanepoel said Tuesday.

He told the Rand Supreme Court in Johannesburg that Kenneth Kgase had been persuaded to take the stand Wednesday after consultations with his lawyers and the trial could therefore continue.

Swanepoel said earlier that Kgase and another prosecution witness were too scared to testify on their allegations that they had been kidnapped and assaulted by the wife of African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela and three co-accused.

Judge M.S. Stegmann agreed to adjourn the hearing until Wednesday at 0800 GMT.

Swanepoel told the court that his witnesses were afraid to give evidence following the weekend kidnapping of another witness, Gabriel Mekgwe, from the protection of a church in Soweto township.

Mekgwe has not been found, and a South African newspaper Tuesday reported that he was seen leaving the safe custody of a church hostel in Soweto Sunday night with a senior ANC official.

It was not known whether Mekgwe left the hostel voluntarily, the Johannesburg Star said. There was no immediate response from the ANC.

Peru's cholera epidemic threatens Latin America

LIMA (R) — Latin America's first cholera epidemic in decades has struck nearly 9,000 people in Peru, killing 66, and threatens to spread across the continent, health experts say.

The epidemic has swamped hospitals in Peru and alarmed neighbouring countries, some of which have banned Peruvian food imports in what the experts called a vain attempt to contain the disease's spread.

Cholera, usually carried by contaminated water or fish, is spreading fast in this impoverished country where raw sewage is pumped into the Pacific and rivers supplying drinking water.

The Health Ministry reported 8,566 cases by Monday, more than double the figure from four days earlier. At least 66 people have died from the bacterial disease, which can cause death from dehydration in three to four hours.

"Cholera is a disease of the

poor, and that makes all of Latin America vulnerable," said Dr. Uriel Garcia, a former Peruvian Health Minister.

"If I were the mayor of Bogota or Caracas, I would be checking my city's water system right now to make sure it wasn't mixing with sewage," he told Reuters, referring to the Colombian and Venezuelan capitals.

About 40 per cent of Lima's water supply is contaminated by fecal matter, a study commissioned by the mayor's office showed.

The Health Ministry advised Peruvians to boil drinking water for 10 minutes, stay away from polluted beaches and abstain from eating raw fish or shellfish, two staples of the Peruvian diet.

The disease has been virtually absent from Latin America since the 1920s.

Hospitals have been stretched to the breaking point.

U.S. T.V. anchorwoman killed in front of her children

MARSHALL, Michigan (AP) — A television anchorwoman who was vexed by threatening calls and a letter from a man she rebuffed was shot to death in her driveway, but investigators Monday didn't rule out other suspects.

Diane Newton King of WUMT-TV in Battle Creek, Michigan, was shot twice Saturday night as she turned to get her two young children out of her car.

Police searched the farmhouse where Newton King, 34, and her husband, former police officer Bradford King, lived with their 3-year-old son and 3-month-old daughter.

Investigators also searched weed-choked fields surrounding the home in southern Michigan.

Newton King and her children had just returned from her native Detroit when she was shot with a small-calibre gun as the youngsters remained strapped into their car seats. Her husband discovered the body in the driveway, Olson said.

Authorities were not limiting their search for a suspect to an anonymous male admirer who sent Newton King a threatening note months earlier, Calhoun

Count Sheriff Jon Olson said at a news conference.

Sheriff's deputies last year investigated threats against Newton King but made no arrests, Sheriff's Lt. Terry Cook said earlier. About two weeks ago, Newton King mentioned in a telephone conversation the general manager of a Colorado TV station where she used to work that a man had been harassing her.

"She had been received calls from a male who had wanted to get into the broadcasting business and was asking for her advice," Jan Hammer, general manager of Colorado TV Station KICT, said.

"The caller asked if she wanted to have lunch with him and she declined."

"She supposedly received a letter in the mail and this letter was composed from either using print or magazine letters that had been cut out and said something to the effect that 'you'll be sorry you didn't have lunch with me.'"

WUHQ Vice President Mark Crawford said the station informed authorities about the calls and letter at the time. Olson said the calls and letter began in July and ended in October.

COLUMN

Schools try paying parents to help kids learn

OAKLAND, California (AP) — An inner-city school is trying a new tactic to interest parents in their children's education: They're paying them. The experimental programme at Webster Elementary School in East Oakland pays parents \$100 each for taking an 11-week programme for teaching ways of helping children in the classroom and with homework. Nine parents have graduated, picking up \$100 plus a \$50 bonus for achieving goals set out at the start of the programme. The programme, which costs between \$15,000 and \$20,000, may be extended to another elementary school in the spring, school officials said. "It's somewhat controversial," said Paul Breckle-Miesner, director of the local school district's health and safety programme. "Some people think parents should assume responsibility on their own. In a perfect world that might be the case, but this isn't a perfect world." Those who do not complete the programme don't get paid. One parent who did, Patricia McTyer, 39 said, "I would have taken it anyway. We got so much out of it. I want to help my child to be a better student. The \$100 just made it sweeter," said McTyer, who was a second-grader at Webster.

Cocaine found in 3 bananas shipments

TAMPA, Florida (AP) — Store clerks unpacking bananas from Colombia found about 74 pounds (33 kilograms) of cocaine in three crates, authorities said. The first illegal stash was discovered in Indiana and two were discovered in different Florida cities. All three crates were imported by Turbana Corp. of Coral Gables, said Brad Knutner, assistant special agent for the U.S. Customs Service. The Florida-bound shipments entered the United States through Tampa and the shipment sent to Indiana was imported through Bridgeport, Connecticut. Robert Lounsbury, Turbana's vice president of operations, said his company had no knowledge of the cocaine. Turbana has armed guards on ships, searches vessels and takes other security steps, but "it's not possible to be a hundred per cent effective," he said. Terre Haute, Indiana, produce workers found 30 pounds (13 kilograms) of cocaine and a package of methamphetamine, police said. Employees at a public super market in Crystal River, Florida, found about 22 pounds (10 kilograms) of cocaine. Another 22 to 26.4 pounds of the drug were found in a crate at a Publix in Orlando, Knutner said. Produce crates are popular with smugglers because authorities can't search all of the thousands transported on each ship. Knutner said. The smugglers often are stowaways who retrieve the cocaine once the crates are unloaded.

Nureyev will not stop dancing

NASHVILLE, Tennessee (AP) — Ballet dancer Rudolf Nureyev says fans should pay no attention to the fact that his current tour is billed as "Nureyev And Friends: The Farewell Tour." "This is not a farewell tour," he said in an interview in the Tennessee newspaper. "It was not my idea to call it that. There are so many requests for engagements to dance still coming in that I see no point in stopping." Nureyev, defected from the Soviet Union in 1961 and has danced with more than 30 of the world's major dance companies since then. He also has choreographed more than 25 productions. But he doesn't expect to stop anytime soon. "I feel good and it keeps me healthy, so I don't know when I'll stop. If work comes along you do it, and you just don't take a vacation."

Hotel offers love-in-a-lie package

SINGAPORE (R) — Care for a change from the usual flowers and chocolates on Valentine's Day? Why not wine and dine your lover while travelling up and down in a glass bubble lift on the outside of a 37-storey building screened by an opera singer or a violinist. Singapore's Pan Pacific Hotel is offering all this as part of its "love in a lie" package. The price is 1,200 Singapore dollars (\$860), including breakfast and a night in hotel suite.

Moscow ready to wind up Warsaw Pact's military role

MOSCOW (Agencies) — The Soviet Union said Tuesday it had agreed with its Warsaw Pact allies to dismantle the alliance's military structure by April.

"Those countries that make up the Warsaw treaty have concluded that the time has come to take steps to wind up the military structure of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation," said presidential spokesman Vitaly Ignatenko.

Ignatenko told a news conference that it had been agreed "to complete the process by April 1." Warsaw Pact foreign and defence ministers will meet in Budapest on Feb. 25 to scrap the alliance's military role, Prime Minister Jozsef Antall announced Tuesday.

Antall, quoting from a letter by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, said the aim of the meeting was to disband the pact's military functions by April 1.

"This will be a historical moment in the life of the nation," Antall proclaimed.

The Pact is made up of the Soviet Union, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland and

Czechoslovakia. It was created in 1955 as a Soviet-led military alliance to counter NATO, but has lost all significance with the most of the countries' break with communism.

News of the planned meeting was initially announced by Czechoslovak President Vaclav Havel. He said Monday that Gorbachev had called for a high-level Warsaw Pact gathering to decide on ending the organisation's military role.

Officials from other Warsaw Pact nations confirmed that similar letters had been received, but Antall was the first to name a date and venue for the meeting.

The meeting appeared to replace a Warsaw Pact summit that had been set for November but was postponed on short notice.

At that gathering, Gorbachev and other Warsaw Pact leaders had been expected to formally announce the end of the Pact as a military alliance.

No reason was announced for

the postponement or the decision to hold a lower-level meeting instead of a summit.

Antall and Havel have been among the most outspoken advocates of an early end to the Pact as a military organisation and its complete dissolution soon after. Other East European leaders have given them increasing support.

Antall, Havel and Polish President Lech Walesa planned to meet in the Hungarian town of Visegrad on Feb. 15 for a summit expected to focus in part on the Pact's future.

Antall told the 31-nation summit of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in November that he hoped the Pact would stop existing by early 1992 at the latest.

Havel Monday suggested Czechoslovakia cooperate more closely with NATO, calling the Western military alliance Europe's sole international body that follows democratic rules.

START treaty still eludes negotiators

WASHINGTON (AP) — A treaty to cut about 30 per cent of the deadliest nuclear weapons in U.S. and Soviet arsenals still is eluding negotiators, the State Department has said.

Three unresolved technical issues were listed by spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler. They involve the exchange of information from missile flight tests, a definition of new missiles and what is known as "downloading."

This refers to how many warheads could be taken off one kind of long-range missile and used on other missiles. The strategic arms reduction treaty (START) would limit each side to 1,600 warheads.

Failure to conclude the accord was cited last month by U.S.

President George Bush as a reason for postponing the summit meeting scheduled for this week with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

In the meantime, a treaty signed in November to cut non-nuclear weapons in Europe is enmeshed in compliance disputes. The major one concerns transfer of three Soviet divisions to naval duty. That way their weapons would not have to be destroyed under the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) agreement.

Secretary of State James Baker told Congress last week he had recommended to Bush he not submit the treaty to the Senate for ratification unless the disputes

were cleared up.

American and Soviet negotiators met for four days last week in Geneva but were unable to settle the strategic weapons issues, Tutwiler said.

They also spent little time on the conventional arms dispute, she said.

Reginald Barthomolew, the under secretary of state for international security affairs, headed the U.S. delegation in Geneva.

He returned to Washington Sunday. Talks will be continued in Geneva under the direction of Richard R. Burt, the U.S. START negotiator.

"Some important issues still need to be closed out," Tutwiler said.

Liberian capital recovers slowly from civil war

MONROVIA, Liberia (AP) — Open shops and traffic jams in the busy waterside market show civilisation is returning to this war-ravaged capital. Instead of gunmen fighting in the streets, taxis and buses now compete for gasoline with relief convoys and stolen Mercedes Benz cars.

Although a solution to the war that left more than 10,000 dead remains elusive, refugees are returning. The city's brewery has reopened at one-tenth of capacity when water is available, cutting the price of a bottle of beer from \$8 to less than \$1.

Relief supplies are arriving, but the quantity falls short of the 5,700 tonnes a month needed to feed the city, according to a U.S. embassy estimate. The population, which had dropped to 80,000, has returned to its previous level of about 500,000, the embassy said.

Troops from the five-nation West African intervention force have cleared warring factions from the capital's streets and chased them into the countryside. Ceasefire negotiations among them were expected to begin in

Lome, Togo.

But the city remains scarred by the destruction of ethnic hatred, and the population doubt that self-appointed leaders can reach the necessary political accommodations to avert more bloodshed.

Roadside mountains of debris, the aftermath of looting, have been trucked farther out of town. Luxury cars stolen from homes of the rich cruise the city, with looters behind the wheel.

Along United Nations drive, the distinctive odor of rotting flesh remains in the tall grasses. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has cleaned St. Peter's Lutheran Church of the corpses of hundreds of people butchered by government soldiers last July in a tribal massacre.

After burying body parts in a common grave, authorities found few bullet-holes in the floor or walls of the church, suggesting the victims were hacked to death with machetes. The church will stand as a memorial to the victims, according to Lutheran Bishop Ronald Diggs.

Bands of orphans roam the streets looking for cash and rice, openly contemptuous of children who chose Western-run orphanages over life on the run. Brutality is commonplace. A Western correspondent saw a crowd beat a child nearly to death for stealing two donuts.

Mothers send their children into deserted homes looking for furniture to burn under curbside pots of oil cooking balls of dough.

When a local supermarket reopened last week, its battered shelves offered an odd assortment of goods — hair straightener, capers and bread stuffing for chickens that haven't been seen in months.

Cattle imported for the peace-keeping force graze in the road, median watched by armed guards. Few dogs, cats, or rats have escaped the hunt for survival.

The municipal airport is open but bribes are required to confirm seats on flights to Freetown, Sierra Leone, where businessmen travel to buy liquor.

The interim government has

enlisted a police force without many uniforms, weapons, or cars. Public confidence in the Volunteer Department was growing until a police commander was caught last week robbing a bank.

Rebel commandos primed by months of combat in the bush find it difficult to adjust to solving arguments without resorting to assault rifles. Palm wine fuels threats of revenge for comrades slain by rival factions.

Few Liberians hold out much hope for an early settlement of the war that began on Dec. 24, 1989, with an invasion of rebels from neighbouring Ivory Coast. In the interim the rebels split into two groups. President Samuel Doe was captured and killed and Liberian refugees set up an interim government.

Monrovia are mindful of Interim President Amos Sawyer's threat to raise an army if the chief rebel leader Charles Taylor fails to agree to a ceasefire in negotiations in Lome, Togo. Dozens of meetings aimed at ending the war have failed to produce a settlement.